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Initial Campaign: Strategic Context, Battles and the Influence of Nankou Campaign: An Interpretive Booklet for WWII Military History Museums

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Initial Campaign

Strategic Context, Battles and the Influence of Nankou Campaign: An Interpretive Booklet for WWII Military History Museums

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May 2015

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An Interpretive Booklet for WWII Military History Museums

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Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to those warriors who served in the Chinese National Revolutionary Army during the Second World War from 1937 to 1945 for their efforts and sacrifice on the way to bring peace and justice.

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Abstract

The battlefield of the Nankou Campaign was the earliest battlefield of China's Second World War, which covered an extensive area of about 700 km² on the north west of Beiping at the border between Hebei and Chahar Provinces. The Nankou Campaign is recalled recently after being obscured for decades. Unfortunately, without a preservation system like the National Park Service, the sites in the battlefield, such as the Great Wall, have been left in ruins for over 70 years. A national battlefield program will be required to rescue the sites. This booklet is created as an interpretation of the history of the Nankou Campaign and its battlefield, in preparation for the exhibitions and public education once a national battlefield park is established for the Nankou Campaign.

Preface

For decades, the Second World War in the Asian-Pacific Theater has been neglected or misinterpreted. As a result of Mao's dictatorship in the Chinese Mainland, the Communist Army was described as the only force fighting against the Japanese invaders before the 1980s. After the 1980s, the truth that the Chinese National Army was the main force of the war started to be uncovered. However, within the last decade, the government owned media on Chinese Mainland considered the Chinese National Army as a weak entity who just waited for other Allied Powers' assistance. This has encouraged, or somehow forced, the other countries to interpret World War II History from their own perspective instead of an over-all view. The United States could consolidate its dominant role in the Asian-Pacific without telling much about its ally, the Republic of China. Japan could deny the invasion of East Asia since China has not explained its resistance objectively.

Since the distortion of the resistance against the Japanese invasion in the Chinese Mainland is the origin of the misinterpretation of World War II in the Asian Theater, the mistake cannot be corrected without a rectification of the WWII history within China itself. As the first campaign in China's strategy at the beginning of the war, the Nankou Campaign, which started on August 8, needs to be interpreted impartially and needs to have the battlefield descriptions preserved to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the chronology.

Most secondary sources focus on skirmishes starting in July after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, and then simply imply that the Songhu Campaign (alias the Battle of Shanghai) breaking out on August 13 was the first campaign. This booklet contains the historical background, the situation and condition of the battlefield and some critical sites, and the timeline of the battles to provide a general view of the Nankou Campaign for readers who are hearing about this historical event for the first time.

Introduction

The Marco Polo Bridge Incident was manufactured by the Japanese Army as an excuse to begin a full invasion all over China, and has been recognized as the outbreak of China's Total War of Resistance against Japan, which is informally called "the 2nd Sino-Japan War" in some source books.

After a series of skirmishes in Beiping and Tianjin, the Japanese forces attempted to take control of the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad quickly so that they could move deep into the north west of China and seize the natural resources. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek could not allow the Japanese Army to rob Shanxi Province for the coal mines so easily. He sent the Chinese 7th Army Group, which was under the command of General Tang Enbo, to defend the area around Nankou along the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad. Therefore, the Nankou Campaign broke out on August 8th at the Town of Nankou on the north of Beiping and the battles lasted for 18 days.

The Nankou Campaign was guided by strategy, as the resistance against the Japanese plan of attack, which aimed at breaking into the northwest of China. It was different from those skirmishes following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in July. Though the Songhu Campaign which broke out on August 13 around Shanghai covered a larger number of troops and a longer period, it was only guided by the strategy in the south of China and could not change the situation in the north. As a result, the Nankou Campaign and the Songhu Campaign were the two principal campaigns respectively leading the warfare in the north and south of China. Moreover, the Nankou Campaign broke out 5 days earlier, which made it the first campaign guided by the strategy.

Though China is much more expansive than Japan, it had suffered unrest since the late Qing Dynasty. When Japan invaded China, the military powers of China were weak and not unified. China, at that moment, was a giant country, but also debilitated; while Japan had just equipped its armies with mechanized weapons and became a powerful dwarf.

Relying on the technologically advanced weaponry including bombers, tanks, artillery and even toxic gas, the Japanese invaders intended to eliminate all Chinese defenses and capture the

Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad in five days.¹ The Chinese 7th Army Group rushed to the front around Nankou for rescue and engaged the Japanese forces on August 8 when the battles started.

The Japanese Army once believed that they enjoyed overwhelming power, but they failed to capture Jüyongguan quickly and found it nearly impossible to reach their goal. Even though the 89th Division of the Chinese Army lost many troops, Jüyongguan never fell to the Japanese.

One week later on August 16, the Japanese troops began to outflank to the west, attempting to find a weak point and breach the Chinese defense. In return, the Chinese Army also sent troops to reinforce the defense on the west.

More Japanese troops were transported from Beiping to the front around Nankou. Though the Chinese Army did not have adequate reinforcements, the soldiers were still holding their positions. The Japanese could not take control of Jüyongguan and kept moving to the west. On August 25, the Japanese Army finally found a weak point at Shuitou along the Great Wall, where the Chinese Army no longer had troops to safeguard. Soon the Japanese troops got through the mountains and directly moved to the rear of the Chinese defense from Shuitou, guided by the Chinese traitors. Thus, the Chinese force was almost besieged and the defense of Jüyongguan became meaningless. On August 26, all Chinese troops began to retreat from the front.

1 Changping District Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). *Historical and Cultural Data of Changping District, Volume 5: Nankou Campaign*. Beijing: Chinese Literature and History Press, 2007. 472.

1 Overview

Title: Nankou Campaign.

Time Period: August 8 – 26, 1937.

Location: Vicinity of the boundary between Beiping and Chahar, along the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad, Republic of China

Belligerents: Republic of China:
National Revolutionary Army.

Empire of Japan:
Imperial Japanese Army.

Strength: China: over 60,000 troops. Japan: over 70,000 troops

Approximate Casualties: China: 30,000. Japan: 15,000³

Outcome: The Chinese defense was broken by the Japanese Army; and the Chinese Army had to retreat.



Fig. 1.1 Location and area of the Republic of China, 1937, Originally by PhiLiP and 白布飘扬, edit by Benlisquare²

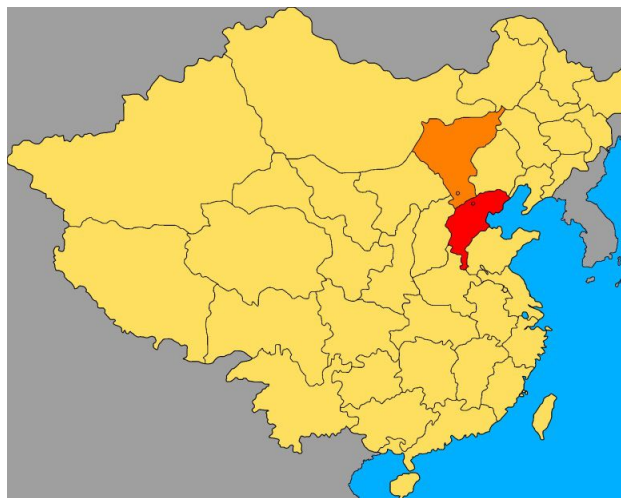


Fig. 1.2 the two provinces that were engaged in the Nankou Campaign, Hebei (red) and Chahar (orange)

2 Picture from the page of “Republic of China” on Wikipedia, available at:
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Republic_of_China_\(orthographic_projection\).svg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Republic_of_China_(orthographic_projection).svg)

3 The number of casualties here may not be accurate. There is a whole section discussing the casualties in the last chapter of this booklet.

2 Background Information

This section introduces the historical background of the prewar period and early war time in China, and provides an overview of the historical events which took place in north China right before the Nankou Campaign broke out. Thus, it is clear that why this campaign could not be avoided according to the strategies of both the Chinese and the Japanese Armies.

The military background provides the basic information of the military forces of the belligerents, and briefly shows the differences between the armies of the two countries with a simple comparison. The tactics in the Nankou Campaign were mainly based on the advantages and shortages of each army.

2.1 Strategic Background

2.1.1 Beginning of the Second World War

Though the prevalent opinion is that China's War of Resistance against Japan entirely started all over the country after the Marco polo Bridge Incident on July 7 in 1937, neither the Chinese nor the Japanese government had pushed the two countries into a total war within a short period right after that incident. And no major campaign had broken out within one month after that incident.⁴

The Nankou Campaign, which broke out one month later on August 8, 1937, was the first campaign of China's World War II⁵. Though not as huge as the Songhu Campaign (alias Battle of Shanghai) in number of troops and time period, the Nankou Campaign broke out 5 days earlier than the Songhu Campaign and was guided by national strategy.

WWII first broke out in China in 1937. The Republic of China was the earliest member in the four chief Allied Powers (the US, UK, USSR, and China) who fought the Fascists. The first campaign in the Theater of China should be officially recognized as the first campaign of the

4 Peattie, Mark, Edward J. Drea, and Hans J. van de Ven. *The battle for China: essays on the military history of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937-1945*. Stanford Univ Pr, 2010. 27.

5 Mitter, Rana. *Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937-1945*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2013. Book title.

entire WWII. To officially recognize this fact, it is necessary to collect, review, interpret all sources, and analyze the significance and effects of this campaign, after it had been obscured for decades due to the misinterpretation of the WWII history by Mao's Communists in the Chinese Mainland.

2.1.2 Strategic Goals

Japan had been developing rapidly since it completed industrialization in modern time, and needed additional land and natural resources. Because of its proximity to Japan, China became the primary target of the Japan's expansion strategy. Since the late Qing Dynasty, some European countries, as well as Russia and Japan expanded their powers and obtained many resources from China by signing on a series of treaties; for example, China made Hong Kong a colony of Britain and, in addition, had to pay a significant amount of currency in silver ingots to Britain. As a result of internal revolutions, the Qing Dynasty ended, and military cliques began to fight each other; China was further divided and became weaker. Japan had planned for a long time to take advantage of this situation, by attempting to establish an "East Asian Empire" under its domination.

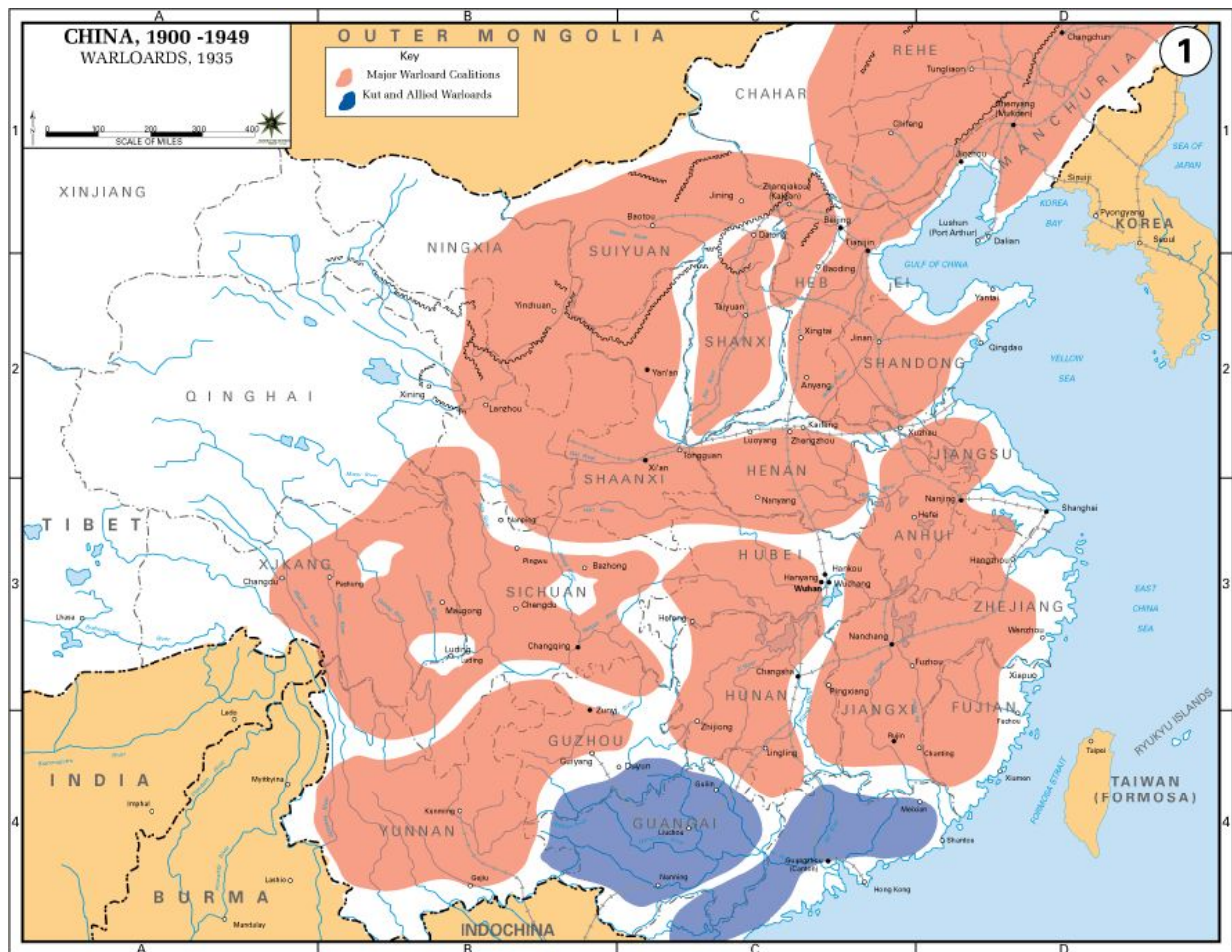


Fig. 2.1 Regional Military Cliques during the Warlord Era of China, 1925⁶

Japanese military forces had been increasing quickly since they captured north-eastern China in 1931, and used that region as their base called “Manchukuo” (Manchuria). After the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, the Japanese Army captured Beiping and expected to move further to the north-west. Aiming at the control of North West China, where abundant mineral resources existed underground, especially Shanxi Province which was famous for coal mines, the Japanese Army needed to take control of the Guan Valley through which the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad passed. To control this only route of transportation into Shanxi Province, the Japanese Army had to attack Nankou, Jüyongguan and Badaling in geographical order from the south to

6 Website of the United States Military Academy (USMA or the West Point), available at: <http://www.usma.edu/history/SiteAssets/SitePages/Chinese%20Civil%20War/ChineseCivilWar01.gif>

the north. So Japan sent geographers and investigators spies to build maps in preparation for an invasion to capture Nankou in a short time / a quick invasion of Nankou.⁷



Fig. 2.2 Map of the North West China drawn by Japanese, marked with natural resources and productions, 1938⁸

Unexpected conflicts broke out frequently around Beiping and Tianjin after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, and diplomatic efforts by Nanjing and Tokyo failed to prevent it from losing control. According to the situation at the time, the Military Affairs Commission of China should have been ready to take the risk of declaring war against Japan as a response to its invasion.

The Military Affairs Commission of China was clear that China was too weak for a total war at that moment, and could not quickly defeat the invaders with one strike. Instead, China was obliged to fight an enduring war in contrast to Japan's "Blitzkrieg-like" strategy. China had to send armies to defend the area around Nankou. Therefore, in July, 1937, a series of actions were taken in preparation for the defense of the passage to north west China. The Chinese

7 Chen, Changjie. "Fierce Battles along the Great Wall." Chap. 3 in *Recollection of the Former Nationalist Commanders' Experience during the War of Resistance against Japan - Marco Polo Bridge Incident*, by Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Committee of Cultural and Historical Data, 166-181. Beijing: Chinese Literature and History Press, 1986. 174.

8 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan. *Records of Achievement during the Incident of China*. Tokyo: Army Consolation Bureau, 1938. 140.

National Revolutionary Army was about to launch a campaign with a strategic purpose at the national level to prevent the Japanese Army from taking over north west China.

2.2 Regional and Geographical Environment

As it has been mentioned in the historical background, China was divided into regions by the warlords. Japan had established their base in the north-eastern China since 1931, which was known as the “three provinces in the north east”, and planned to extend the area under its control. The Chinese warlords in the north also tried to consolidate their governing in their own regions. The area around the battlefield of the Nankou Campaign was at a critical position that different powers were all attempting to capture. This situation created a great hardship for the Chinese National Revolutionary Army to defend the Beiping – Suiyuan Railroad around Nankou.

2.2.1 Chinese Army: Fighting Enemies on Three Sides Alone

Located at the boundary between the plain and mountains on the north-eastern side of Beiping, Nankou, which means "the opening at the southern end of the valley", is the first pass that one would have to face when travelling through the Guan Valley along the railroad. This area could be threatened directly by the Japanese forces and their puppet troops of Manchukuo from the north-east, where it had fallen to Japan in 1931. For example, during the Defense of the Great Wall breaking out in 1933, the Chinese 29th Army was defending at Gubeikou, a few miles away from Nankou, against the Japanese forces right from the north-east. Being adjacent to Chahar which was on the north, this area was also threatened by the force of Mengjiang; and the city of Beiping on the south was rapidly falling after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. The only remaining side that was not affected by the Japanese invaders was the Northwest. The Nankou Campaign was actually an operation on three sides against the intruders.

In this campaign, the Japanese forces and their puppet troops kept attacking Chicheng and Zhangyuan on the north of the battlefield, while the Japanese main force from Beiping focused on the front around Nankou and Juyong Pass. The Chinese Army retreated to the west to Yu County, Guangling and Laiyuan at last.

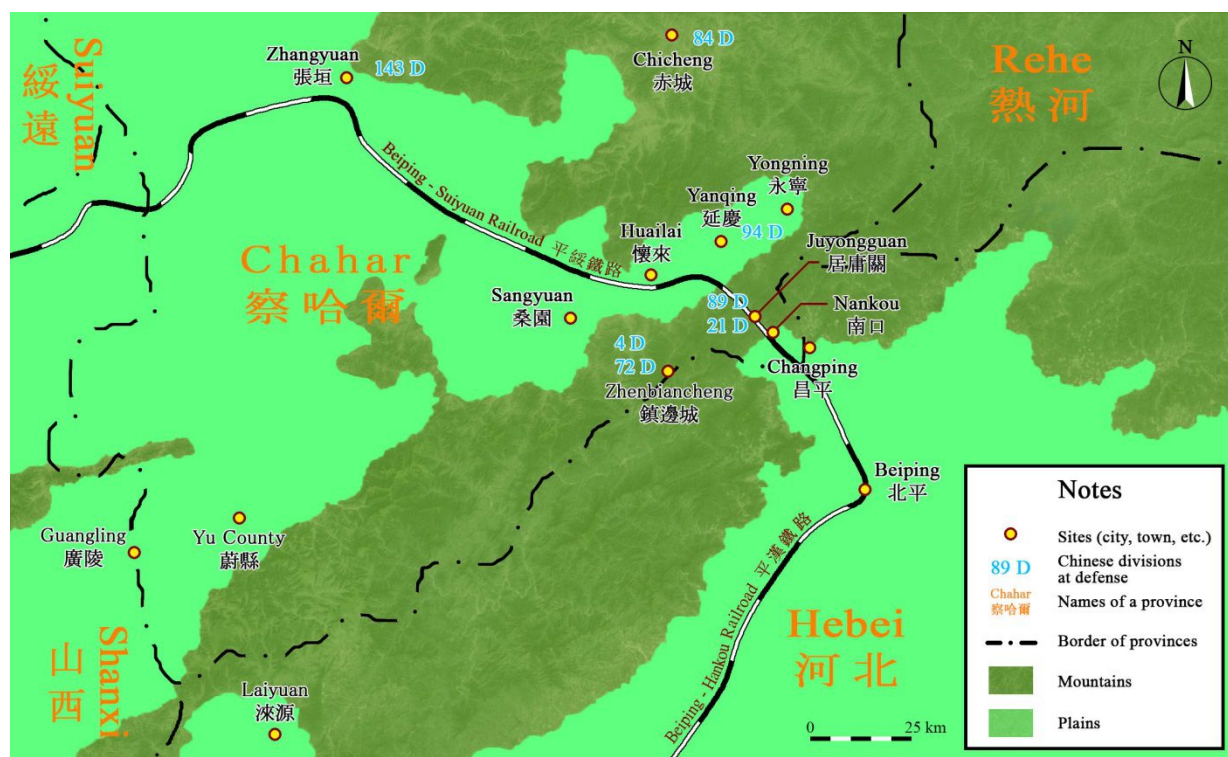


Fig. 2.3 The areas around the Battlefield of the Nankou Campaign, showing the Chinese divisions at defense⁹

2.2.2 Terrain Features

Beiping and Chahar were separated by the mountain ridge. The shortest valley connecting the two plains was called Guangou (or “the Guan Valley”, since the syllable “gou” means “valley” in Chinese). Nankou, Jüyongguan and Badaling were the three passes along the valley from the south to the north. The Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad was right in this valley.

The altitude of most mountains in the battlefield of Nankou Campaign was around 800-900 meters (the ground was about 200-300 meters in the same area), except for some mountains which were about 1300 meters high.¹⁰ The mountains were steeper on the south east sides than other sides, which was an advantage for the defense against enemies from Beiping on the south-east. However, the Great Wall was built to defend the barbarians from the north in ancient times,

9 This sort of maps of the battlefields are based on the screenshots from Google Earth online map and edited by the author of this booklet. Other maps of the battlefields in this booklet are created in the same way.

10 Altitudes in this article are based on the data from Google Earth.

and the defenders could not benefit when they were attacked from the south. Sometimes, structures of the Great Wall became obstacles for the Chinese defense in Nankou Campaign.¹¹

2.2.3 Climate

The weather changed a lot in the mountains in this area, and the temperature varied from days to nights. It could be either hot or cold, even in summer. The soldiers at defense sometimes **were required had** to walk in the icy water or stay under the scorching sunshine for days, which might result in disease and injury since the medical condition of the Chinese Army was extremely poor.

Fogs and rains in the mountains sometimes created opportunities for the Chinese Army to counterattack the Japanese intruders. The Chinese soldiers could take advantage of the weather change to slightly balance their inferiority in weaponry, while the Japanese troops were unfamiliar with the terrains and climate when they first occupied the region.

2.3 Military Units

There is not much available information of the military units in the archives. Those names of commanders and the structures of the units below divisions were found from the primary sources, usually records taken down or memoirs written by commanders. Some information is unclear or incomplete, which is marked with a question mark (?); unsure names of commanders and titles of regiments are in italic. References can be found in the section of the timeline, where the titles of military units or the names of commanders are mentioned.

2.3.1 The structure of the Chinese Forces at Defense in the Nankou Campaign

Some abbreviations are created for divisions and armies, such as (c) for “commander”, (v) for “vice commander”, and (s) for “chief of staff”. The units below divisions only provide the name of the commanders.

11 Wang, Zhonglian. *A Brief Analysis of Strategic Theories and Actual Battles*. Taipei: New Culture Press, 1987. 11;
Tan, Ying. *Vision of a Drifting Life: Tan Ying's Memoir at the Age of 100*. Taipei: Grace Publishing House, 2011. 46.

Tab. 2.1 Military Units of the Chinese Forces in Nankou Campaign

| Main Forces at the Front of Nankou Campaign ¹² | | | Commander: Tang Enbo | |
|---|--|---|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 13th Army (c) Tang Enbo (s) Zhang Xuezhong 28,000 troops | 89th Division (c) Wang Zhonglian (v) Long Muhan (s) Wu Shaozhou | 265th Brigade Li Xian | 529th Regiment | Luo Fanggui |
| | | 267th Brigade Lai Ruxiong | 530th Regiment | Tan Naida |
| | 4th Division (c) Wang Wanling (v) Chen Daqing | 10th Brigade Ma Liwu | 533th Regiment | Li Shouzheng ¹³ |
| | | 12th Brigade Shi Jue | 534th Regiment | Shu Rong |
| 17th Army (c) Gao Guizi 14,000 troops | 21st Division (c) Li Xianzhou (v) Huang Zuxun | 19th Regiment | Fu Jingfang | |
| | | 20th Regiment | Liu Hanxing | |
| | 61st Brigade <i>Cui Zhendong</i> | 23th Regiment | Ni Zuyao | |
| | | 24th Regiment | Jiang Dangyi | |
| | 84th Division (c) Gao Guizi | 63rd Brigade <i>Lü Xiangyun</i> | 121st Regiment | <i>Li Hongci</i> |
| | | | 122nd Regiment | Liu Fanggui |
| | | | 123th Regiment | <i>Ma Guiheng</i> |
| | | | 124th Regiment | <i>Li Shangjing</i> |
| | | | 125th Regiment | <i>Zhang Zigeng</i> |
| | | | 126th Regiment | <i>Wang Yuantang</i> |
| | 72nd Division (c) Chen Changjie 6000 troops | 208th Brigade Lü Ruiying | 415th Regiment | Gao Jinbo |
| | | 217th Brigade Liang Chunpu | 416th Regiment | Zhang Shuzhen |
| | 94th Division (c) Zhu Huaibing | over 5000 troops | | |
| | Independent 7th Brigade | Ma Yanshou | 4000 troops | |
| | | Artillery 21st Regiment | | |
| | | Artillery 27th Regiment less than 2000 troops | | |
| Defense of Zhangyuan ¹⁴ Commander: Liu Ruming | | | | |

12 Gou, Jitang. *Actual Battles of the Chinese 3rd Front during the War of Resistance against Japan*. Taipei: Wenxing Publishing House, 1962. 10-23.

13 Wang 1987, 34.

14 Changping Committee of CPPCC 2007, 312.

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 68th Army | 143rd Division (c) Liu Ruming |
| (c) Liu Ruming | Security Troops of Chahar Province |
| Reinforcements (had not arrived in time) ¹⁵ Commander: Wei Lihuang | |
| 14th Army | 10th Division (c) Li Mo'an |
| (c) Li Mo'an | 83rd Division (c) Liu Kan |
| | 85th Division (c) Chen Tie |

2.3.2 The structure of the Japanese Attacking Forces in the Nankou Campaign

Tab. 2.2 Military Units of the Japanese Forces in Nankou Campaign¹⁶

| | | | |
|---------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 11th Division | Commander: Suzuki | 30,000 troops in total | 40+ artillery in total |
| 1st Division | Commander: Sakai | | |
| 20th Division | Commander: Kawagishi | 10,000 troops | Not Clear |
| 5th Division | Commander: Itagaki | Over 25,000 troops | Over 200 artillery |

2.3.3 Comparison of Military Forces: Debilitated Giant versus Mighty Dwarf

Tab. 2.3 Comparison of the forces between the Chinese and Japanese Army¹⁷

| | China | Japan |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Unification | Only unified in name; armies were previously commanded by warlords, who became generals of the Chinese Army in the name of the resistance against Japanese invasion. | Whole country had the same goal: to take control of east Asia. |
| The Training of soldiers | Training were not regular or strict; most soldiers lacked experiences for combats; some were college students; only some of Chiang Kai-shek's first-class divisions only those sophisticated soldiers who survived from the interior conflicts between warlords were better at combats. | Almost all soldiers were trained regularly, since the plan of getting the whole east Asia was made before the war. |

¹⁵ Changping Committee of CPPCC 2007, 312.

¹⁶ Gou 1962, 7.

¹⁷ Gou 1962, 37,38.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Weaponry | Infantry was the main force. The number of artillery was limited. Only the 89th Division was equipped with weapons bought from Germany. Other troops were using old rifles that could not reach a range as long as the Japanese rifles could. Sometimes soldiers even need to fight with swords when they ran out of bullets. No air force was available. | Infantry, cavalry and artillery cooperated with each other, usually covered by tanks and planes. |
| Transportation and supplies | The transportation relied on the railroad, which was often assaulted by the Japanese planes. Food and other supplies were inadequate, and the medical treatment was poor. | Railroads from Beiping were not interrupted so reinforcements and supplies could be transported to Nankou. |

2.4 Tactics

2.4.1 Tactics used by the Japanese Army while Attacking

The Japanese troops always launched attacks in daytime and stayed in camps in the night. Usually, they first finished reconnaissance by airplanes since the Chinese Army did not have any air force, and then bombed the Chinese positions with artillery. At last, the Japanese infantry covered by tanks moved forward to break the Chinese defense and capture the position.

When the Chinese defenses were too firm to break and the positions were difficult to capture, the Japanese Army launched toxic chemical bombs.¹⁸

2.4.2 Tactics used by the Chinese Army while Defending

Chinese soldiers could fight in both daytime and the night. As the Japanese Army's long-ranged weapons could reach a longer distance than the Chinese weapons could, the Chinese Army was not able to repulse the Japanese attack easily in daytime. However, the Chinese soldiers were better at fighting in the darkness, so they often counterattack the intruders in the night time.

The Chinese forces set in-depth positions with multiple layers of defense. Once the first layer of the defense was broken by the Japanese invaders, the second layer could counterattack the invaders from the left and right sides. When the Japanese troops was bombing the positions of the Chinese defense with artillery and planes, the Chinese soldiers hid themselves to let the Japanese believe that there were no living troops at defense; and when the Japanese infantry

¹⁸ Gou 1962, 38,39.

came close to capture the position, the Chinese soldiers suddenly started to counterattack. Many Chinese soldiers were skilled in hand-to-hand combats with Chinese war swords. Once they ran out of bullets or the Japanese troops came close, they jumped out of their positions and fought the Japanese soldiers with swords. This was probably the last time when swords were widely used in a modern warfare.¹⁹

Due to the inferior weapons and equipment of most Chinese troops and the shortage of anti-tank guns or missiles, the Japanese tanks and armored vehicles became a threat to the Chinese defense. The Chinese Army had to develop a close-combat tactic at a horrible cost of numerous soldiers' lives: the Chinese soldiers rushed to the Japanese tanks and threw bundled hand grenades to the tanks in a close distance; some soldiers climbed onto the tanks and shot inside with pistols through the viewports/sight ports.²⁰ There is no doubt that the Chinese Army suffered extremely heavy casualties in the battles against the Japanese tanks.

19 Gou 1962, 38.

20 "Bloody Fights at Juyong Pass (Xue Zhan Juyongguan)", by Xiao Fang, a journalist of the National News Weekly of China (Guo Wen Zhou Bao). in Gou 1962, 35.

3 Introduction of the Important Sites in the Battlefield

The directions described in this section, such as front and back, left and right, are mainly based on the defense of Chinese Army. Since the Japanese Army already captured Beiping and was moving to the north, the Chinese Army had to defend in the mountains and fight the invaders from the south. For the Chinese forces, which were facing the south, the east would be the “left wing”, and the west would be the “right wing” of their defense; the south was usually the front, and the north was the rear.

Sometimes, the spelling of the names of one place varied; the pronunciations were usually similar or the same, while the spelling in Chinese characters could be different. While reading some primary sources, the readers should notice that the name of the same place may be spelt in different ways. This was caused by the different dialects spoken by the soldiers and local villagers.

Due to the constant interior conflicts in the Republican Period, boundaries of the provinces in China changed very often. The battlefield of Nankou Campaign covered a large area around the border between Hebei Province and Chahar Province, and many sites at the front were located along the border. As a result, it is difficult to determine which county or province a site was located in at that time.

3.1 Left (East) Wing

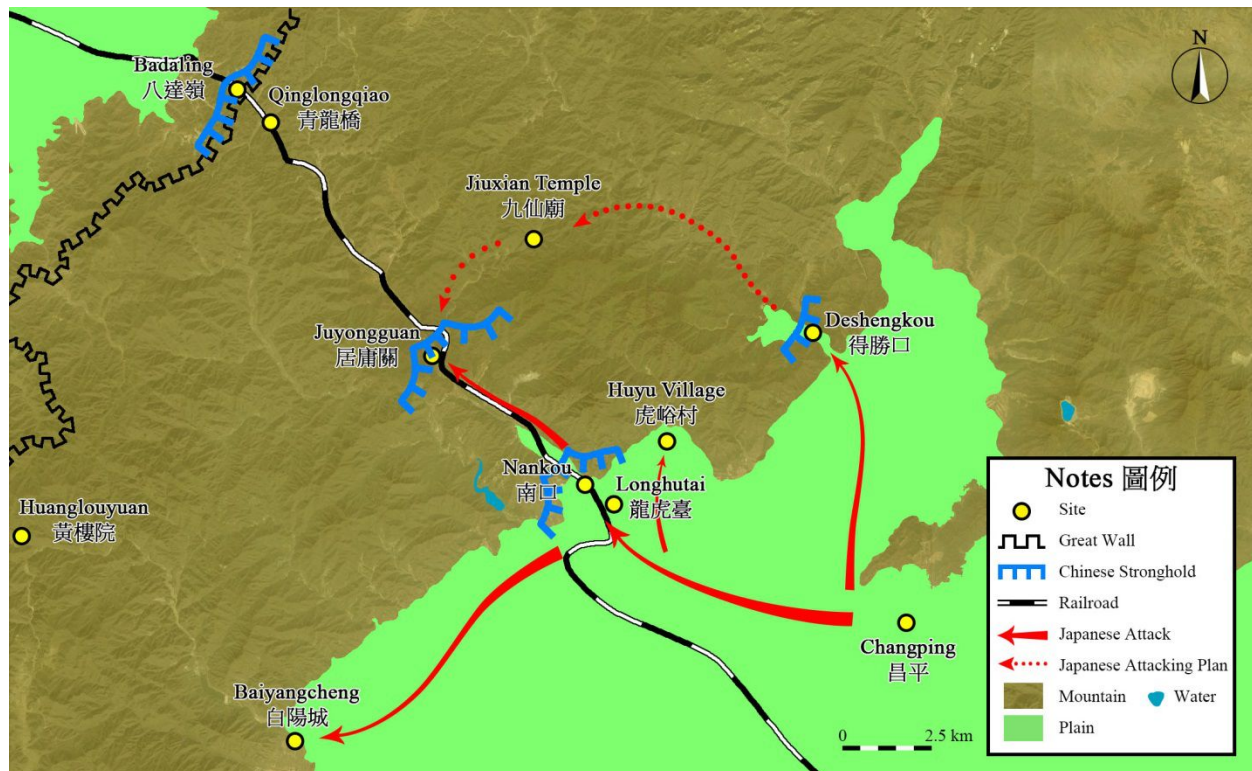


Fig. 3.1 Battlefield of the Nankou Campaign – Left Wing

3.1.1 Deshengkou

Deshengkou is located in the north west of Changping District and belongs to the town of Shisanling which means “the 13 tombs of the imperial family of the Ming Dynasty”. It is 8 kilometers away on the north east of Nankou, as the opening of another valley next to the Guan Valley.²¹

In the Nankou Campaign, Deshengkou was defended by the 530th Regiment of the Chinese 89th Division. The Japanese Army attempted to take control of Deshengkou and get through the valley, so that they would be able to attack the rear of Jüyongguan. The Chinese defense was firm since the soldiers fought hard. This Japanese plan of attack failed.²²

21 Geographical information is collected from Google Earth Client software, which is also available at <http://map.google.com>. Same for the descriptions of other sites.

22 Gou 1962, 12-17.

3.1.2 Longhutai

Longhutai is a tiny hill in front of the Nankou Pass. The distance between this hill and the pass is less than 1 kilometer. This sort of situation always brings troubles to the defense: if the troops defending the mountains at Nankou send a group onto the hill, those troops will be in great danger due to the tiny size of the hill; but if they simply abandon the hill, the enemy will probably use it as a base of artillery to bomb the main positions of the defense on the mountains right behind the hill.

In the Nankou Campaign, the Chinese 529 Regiment had to set a position on this hill. The troops that were sent to this position suffered terrible casualties in the battles.²³

3.1.3 Nankou

The Nankou Pass is located at the southern end of Guangou (or “the Guan Valley”) as one of the strongholds along the Great Wall of the Ming Dynasty, which now belongs to the Changping District in Beijing. Anyone who attempts to get through the Guan Valley from the south to the north has to take control of the Nankou Pass first.

According to the Map of the Republic of China in the war period, the Nankou Town was in the Chahar Province, which was adjacent to the Hebei Province. In the Nankou Campaign, the Japanese invaders bombed the Nankou Pass and the Nankou Town numerous times, finally taking control of both. However, the mountains on both sides of the Nankou Pass were still defended by the Chinese soldiers, who kept firing at the Japanese troops when they tried to enter the Guan Valley. The Chinese defense power at this place was the 529th Regiment. The commander of this regiment, Luo Fanggui, was once reported dead; later he was found badly injured in the ruins.²⁴ Commander Luo died in the Battle of Taierzhuang one year later in 1938.

23 Gou 1962, 12,13,35.

24 Gou 1962, 12-19.



Fig. 3.2 Japanese tanks broke into the Nankou Town in August, 1937, provided by the Archives of Changping²⁵

The masonry beacon tower on the east side of Nankou, which was built in the Ming Dynasty with granite and lime stones, remains in ruin with one of the four corners collapsed. The foundation of this beacon tower is in a good condition. Thus, though the structure has not been restored, it is not in great danger.

25 Changping District Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). *Historical and Cultural Data of Changping District, Volume 8: the 70th Anniversary of Nankou Campaign*. Beijing: Chinese Literature and History Press, 2008. 23. Also available at the website of Beijing Daily: http://www.bjd.com.cn/10zdtj/200801/02/t20080102_405992.html



Fig. 3.3 The beacon tower at Nankou, 2012, by Eric S.

3.1.4 Jüyongguan

Jüyongguan, or the Jüyong Pass (the Chinese syllable “guan” means “pass”), is one of the most famous and important passes along the Great Wall in the Changping District, Beijing. The geographical coordinates is 40°17'20.36"N, 116°04'5.72"E. This pass is located in the central part of the Guan Valley.

Rebuilt in the 1990s, the Jüyong Pass, that people can see today, was and still is known as the “most magnificent pass.”²⁶ The historic structure, that could have reflected the battles, is no longer visible.

26 Committee of Geographical Information of Beijing. *Local Chronicles of Beijing - Cultural Heritage - Great Wall*. Edited by Mingyi Zhang, Lixing Wang and Bingren Duan. Beijing: Beijing Publishing Group, 2008. 307,308.



Fig. 3.4 an over view of the Jüyong Pass after rebuilt²⁷

At the time of the Nankou Campaign, Jüyongguan was in the Chahar Province. During the campaign, Jüyongguan was defended as the most critical fortress by the Chinese 89th Division. The command center of this division was set under the Yuntai (“Cloud Platform”). After the Japanese invaders captured Nankou, the Chinese defense around Jüyongguan became the first front. The Chinese 89th Division defeated the Japanese attacks around Jüyongguan. The Japanese intruders tried hard to capture Jüyongguan, so they moved to the west to outflank the Chinese troops at defense and finally broke the Chinese defense at Shuitou. Since the rear of the Chinese defense was threatened, and since the Japanese troops could have returned to the back side of Jüyongguan after they got through Shuitou, the defense of Jüyongguan itself became meaningless. The Chinese forces had to be drawn back from Jüyongguan in order to avoid unnecessary casualties.

27 Photo from Wikipedia, available at: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a0/Juyongguan10.JPG>



Fig. 3.5 Ancient gateway at Juyongguan, Great Wall of China, (estimated) 1905--1910, by Sanshichiro Yamamoto. (from the Hulme collection in Historical Photographs of China, available at: <http://visualisingchina.net/#hpc-oh-s02>)

3.1.5 Qinglongqiao

The Qinglongqiao Railway Station is on the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad near Badaling. It was a key point of the transportation during the war. This railway station is abandoned today.

Before the Nankou Campaign broke out, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sent several telegrams to General Tang Enbo to urge him to blow up the railroad and the tunnel around Qinglongqiao Station.²⁸ During the campaign, the Chinese Army relied on Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad for transporting reinforcements and supplies from the rear to any places behind Qinglongqiao. Once the Japanese forces took control of the Guan valley, the Japanese Army would not be able to transport their troops and equipment in the opposite direction along the railroad.

3.1.6 Badaling

Badaling is the main pass along the Great Wall at the northern end of the Guan Valley, which is now located in the Yanqing County. The Japanese Army could attack Huailai and Zhangyuan after they captured Badaling. Therefore, once the intruders from the south broke the defense at Badaling, they would face few obstacles on their way to move forward directly into Shanxi Province in the North West along the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad. Today, the Badaling

28 Gou 1962, 12.

pass has become a famous Great Wall park in Beijing that is open to the public since being rebuilt in the 1950s.²⁹



Fig. 3.6 the Great Wall at Badaling, 2004³⁰

In the Nankou Campaign, the Japanese had not even gotten a chance to attack Badaling from the south since they could not break the Chinese defense at Jüyongguan. After the Japanese Army outflanked to the west and got across the defensive line at Shuitou, the Chinese troops at Badaling and Jüyongguan were drawn back.³¹

29 Committee of Geographical Information of Beijing 2008, 306.

30 Photo from Wikipedia, available at:
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0f/Great_Wall_of_China_at_Badaling%2C_China%2C_April_2004.jpg

31 Gou 1962, 17,18.



Fig. 3.7 The Great Wall of China at Badaling, 1877, by Thomas Child
(from the National Archives (London) collection in Historical Photographs of China. Available at:
<http://visualisingchina.net/#hpc-na01-88>)

3.2 Central Area

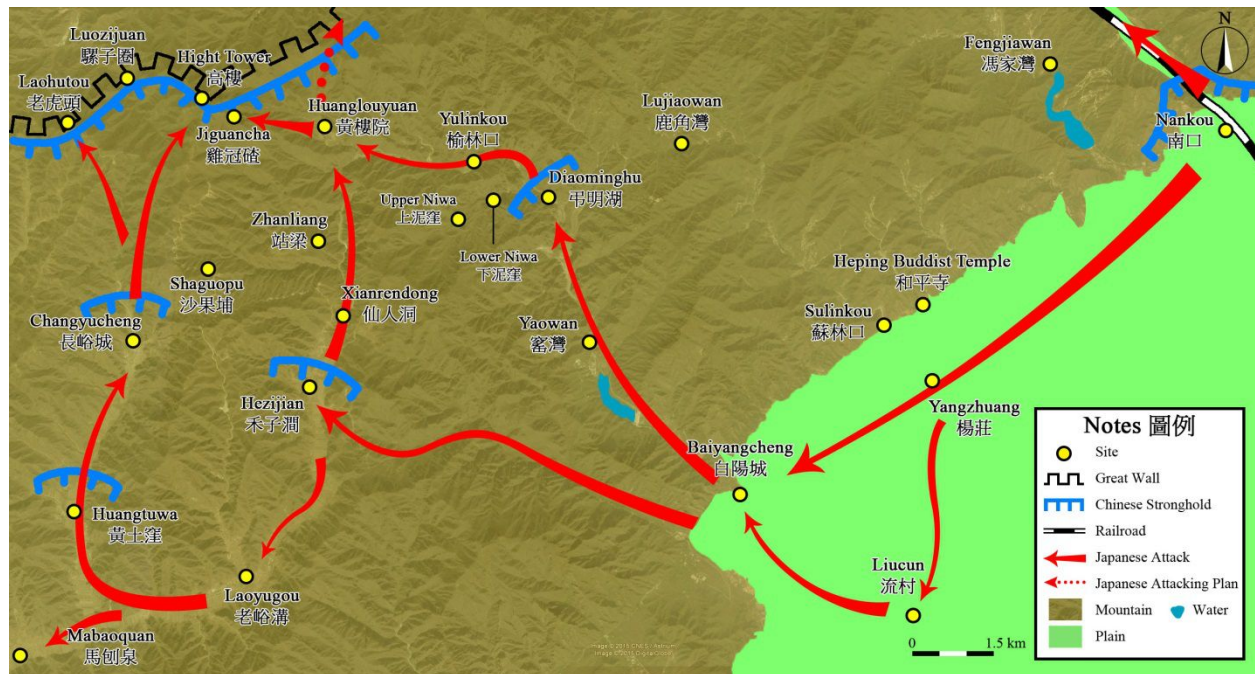


Fig. 3.8 Battlefield of the Nankou Campaign – Central Area

3.2.1 Baiyangcheng

The valley starting at Baiyangcheng heading to the west into the mountains is called Baiyanggou or the Baiyang Valley. The second syllable “yang” varies when written in Chinese. Baiyangcheng became a village after the war.

In the Nankou Campaign, when the Japanese Army failed to capture Jüyongguan quickly, it began to send troops to the west. Baiyanggou was the first path they went through, which connected the eastern part and the central part of the battlefield.³²

3.2.2 Diaominghu

Diaominghu, or the Diaoming Lake (in which the syllable “hu” means “lake” in Chinese), was a tiny pond in the Baiyang Valley. The lake does not exist anymore but the place has already got its name.

³² Gou 1962, 15,16.

When the Japanese Army was outflanking to the west through the Baiyang Valley, the Chinese Wu Shaozhou Attachment blocked the way around the Diaoming Lake and started a seesaw battle against the Japanese Army.³³

3.2.3 Huanglouyuan

Huanglouyuan is located 12 kilometers away from the Jüyong Pass on the west at the foot of the Great Wall. The syllable “yuan” means “circle” or “yard” in Chinese, and this place probably got its name after the shape of the mountains around it. It is sometimes recorded as “Huanglaoyuan” due to the similar pronunciations. The part of the Great Wall on the mountains around Huanglouyuan is known as “the Huanglouyuan Great Wall”.



Fig. 3.9 the Great Wall at Huanglouyuan, 2005, by Yang Guoqing

The two mountain ridges on the east and west side of Huanglouyuan are called Dongdaling and Xidaling. The syllable “dong” and “xi” means “east” and “west” in Chinese, while “daling” means “large mountain”. As a result, these two places are also known as the “East Mt. Large” and “West Mt. Large”, or just the “East Daling” and “West Daling”. Due to the different dialects spoken by the Chinese soldiers (who came from other regions in China) and the local villagers, the name of Xidaling was sometimes recorded as “Shidaling” or “Shidaoling”.

33 Gou 1962, 13-15,18.

In the Nankou Campaign, Huanglouyuan was right at the core of the battlefield. The mountains around Huanglouyuan were a little lower than other mountain ridges, although it was not a valley. As a result, the Japanese Army attempted to break the Chinese defense at Huanglouyuan after they failed to capture the Jüyong Pass. The Chinese Wu Shaozhou Detachment resisted the Japanese Army at Huanglouyuan for days. The Japanese Army failed again to break the Chinese defense and outflanked further west.³⁴

3.2.4 Hezijian

Hezijian, or the Hezi Ravine (the Chinese syllable “jian” means “ravine” or “stream”), is located 4 kilometers away from Huanglouyuan on the south. A straight valley connected these two sites.

In the Nankou Campaign, the position at the Hezi Ravine was defended by the 19th Regiment of the Chinese 4th Division. For a short time, the Japanese Army broke the defense at the Hezi Ravine and moved to the north in order to attack Huanglouyuan.³⁵

3.2.5 850 Elevation

Unlike the names of most other places which existed long before the Nankou Campaign, the 850 Elevation was named after its altitude during the campaign. There is no typical mark for this site except the height. As a result, the location of this elevation is unsure though it has been addressed numerous times in different source books. The location in the currently published map is also questionable.

According to the descriptions of the battles written by the witnesses, the 850 Elevation should be on the north of the Hezi Ravine and close to Huanglouyuan.³⁶

In the Nankou Campaign, the 850 Elevation was captured by the Chinese and the Japanese forces alternately many times. When the Chinese 4th Division was too exhausted to hold the position, the Japanese Army took control of the elevation; but the 416th Regiment in the Chinese

34 Gou 1962, 15,17,18.

35 Gou 1962, 14-17.

36 Gou 1962, 18;
Tan 2011, 53.

72nd Division repulsed the Japanese force and recaptured the 850 Elevation, which allowed the Chinese force to keep controlling the area around this elevation for another few days.³⁷

3.3 Right (West) Wing

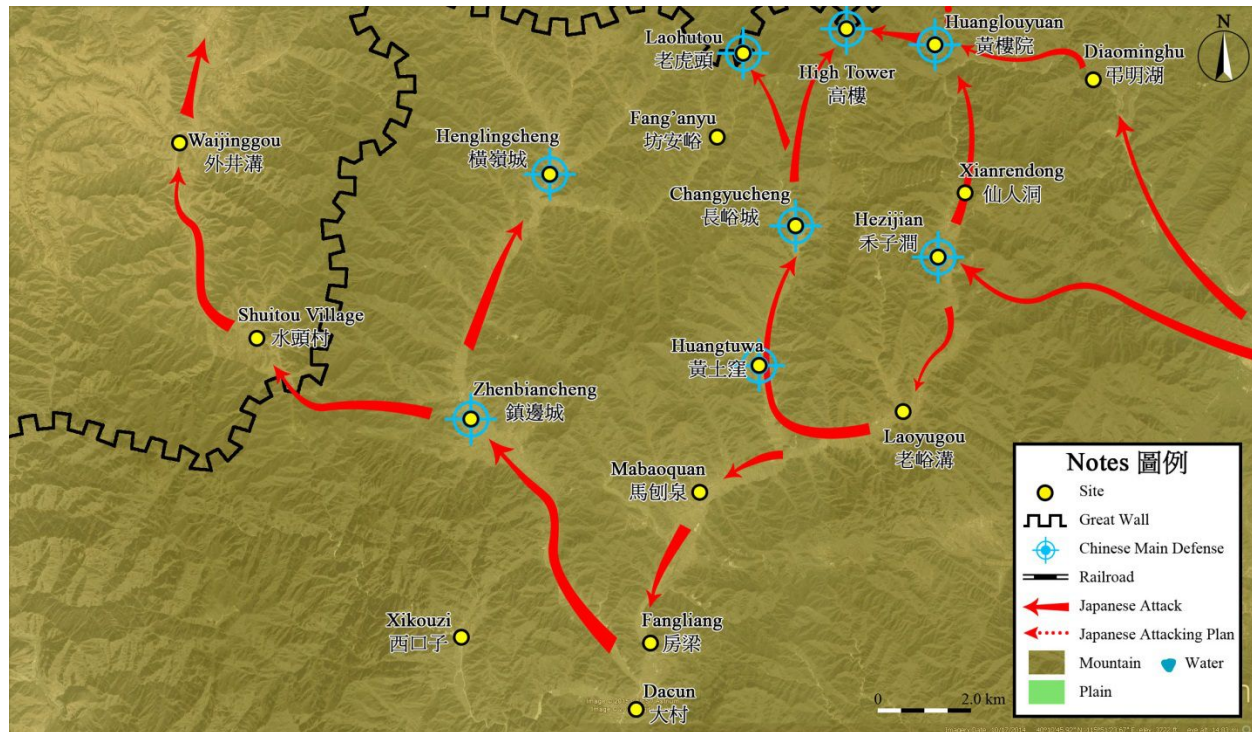


Fig. 3.10 Battlefield of the Nankou Campaign – Right Wing

3.3.1 Changyucheng

Changyucheng, or the Changyu Barracks (the syllable “cheng” here means “barracks” instead of “city”), is located on the west (slightly south) of Nankou; and the distance between the two sites is about 20 kilometers. It is in a valley that is 2 kilometers on the west of and almost parallel to the valley connecting Hezajian and Huanglouyuan. The mountain directly on the north of the Changyucheng Village is the highest peak along the Great Wall near Beijing at a level of about 1440 meters above sea level. A watch tower of the Great Wall was built in the Ming Dynasty on the top of this mountain peak, which has been known as “the High Tower”.

37 Gou 1962, 16-18,20.

In the Nankou Campaign, the positions were originally defended by the Chinese 4th Division. The Chinese 72nd Division arrived and took over the defense around August 20.³⁸

At that time, the altitude of the High Tower was reported as 1390 meters, so the mountain peak was named 1390 Elevation. There were fierce battles around the High Tower in the campaign. Holes and cracks left by bullets and bombs were still clear to see until 2012, when the Great Wall in Changping District was repaired. Now the marks of the war have been wiped out, and the tower standing there is no longer the original High Tower that witnessed that campaign.



Fig. 3.11 the High Tower before and after being rebuilt, 2012, by Eric S.

Some local villagers recollected that a Chinese soldier died at the High Tower, holding his rifle and facing his south west where the Japanese came from. He was probably killed by the Japanese chemical bombs as his body remained complete with no fatal injuries.³⁹ The so-called “guerrillas”, which became more famous than the regular armies later in China due to Mao’s propaganda, often searched the battlefield to gather some weapons from dead soldiers. One “guerrilla” was trying to grab the rifle from that dead Chinese soldier but got himself killed, for the dead soldier’s finger was still holding the trigger.⁴⁰

38 Gou 1962, 20.

39 Gou 1962, 38,39.

40 This is told by local villagers and recorded by Li Guodai of the local government of Changping in the article “He Still Faced the Enemies”, which requires more proofs. There is a report on the website News of the Communist Party of China: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/85037/8377894.html>

3.3.2 Luo zijuan

Luo zijuan, in which the Chinese syllable “Luo zi” means “mules” and “juan” means “pen”, is located 1.5 kilometers on the west of the High Tower. In the late Qing Dynasty, this area was used as the pasture to keep mules and donkeys.

In the Nankou Campaign, Luo zijuan was defended by the Chinese 4th Division and the Wu Shaozhou Detachment,⁴¹ and the field hospital of the Chinese Army was set at the Luo zijuan Village.⁴²

3.3.3 Laohutou

Laohutou, in which “laohu” means “tiger” and “tou” means “head”, was a position of the Chinese defense in the Nankou Campaign, located on the west of the High Tower. It was a critical connection between Changyucheng and Henglingcheng. Now a radio station has been built at this place.

3.3.4 Zhen biancheng

Zhen biancheng, which means “the barracks at the front”, is located 27 kilometers away on the west and slightly to the south of Nankou. It was also built as an affiliated structure to the Great Wall in the Ming Dynasty.

In the Nankou Campaign, Zhen biancheng was in the most western part of the battlefield, defended by the Chinese 72nd Division.⁴³ The Japanese Army broke the defense at Zhen biancheng and moved to the rear through Shuitou.⁴⁴

The gate of the Barracks, which was the only existing part of this ancient structure, was rebuilt in 2012. Most building materials on the surface were replaced by new bricks. The historic exterior was totally gone.

41 Wang 1987, 29.

42 Told by local villagers, more evidences and clues required.

43 Gou 1962, 10.

44 Wang 1987, 36.



Fig. 3.12 Gate of the Zhenbiancheng Barracks before and after rebuilt, 2012, from Panoramio and by Eric. S.⁴⁵

3.3.5 Henglingcheng

Henglingcheng is another barracks along the Great Wall, which is located 5.5 kilometers on the north of Zhenbiancheng. The distance between Henglingcheng and Nankou is about 25 kilometers. Now Henglingcheng has become a village. Most parts of the original structures of the barracks are gone, but the main gate remains complete which is in fair condition.



Fig. 3.13 One of the towers of the Hengling Barracks, by Yang Guoqing

⁴⁵ The photo on the left, showing the exterior of Zhenbiancheng before rebuilt, is found at Panoramio, available at: <http://www.panommio.com/photo/72427320>

In the Nankou Campaign, the command center of the Chinese 4th and 72nd Divisions was in Henglingcheng. The battles around this area were fierce because the Japanese Army continuously sent troops to the west.⁴⁶

3.3.6 Shuitou

Shuitou is a pass on the Great Wall near Zhenbiancheng, which has been developed into a village now. The watch towers of the Great Wall at Shuitou collapsed after the war, and have not been repaired.



Fig. 3.14 The Great Wall at Shuitou, where the Japanese Army passed through the Chinese defense. Left: provided by the Archives of Changping; Right: by Dr. Shi Yufeng.

By the end of the Nankou Campaign, the Chinese Army did not have any reinforcement. The Japanese Army kept outflanking to the west and finally broke the Chinese defense at Shuitou, moving to Huailai, where the Chinese headquarters was located.⁴⁷

46 Gou 1962, 15-23.

47 Gou 1962, 22,23,27.

3.4 The Rear

3.4.1 Kangzhuang

Kangzhuang, or the Kang Village, is located 10 kilometers on the north-west of Badaling, which has now become the Kangzhuang Town. The command center of the Chinese 89th Division was in Kangzhuang during the Nankou Campaign.

3.4.2 Huailai

The original Huailai County was located 20 kilometers on the west of Badaling in the basin, which was also 22 kilometers on the north of Zhenbiancheng.⁴⁸ The Guanting Reservoir was finished in 1954, after which the original Huailai County was submerged under the water. The new Huailai County was located 23 kilometers on the north-west of the original one, which is not the historical site in World War II.

In the Nankou Campaign, the headquarters of the Chinese Army was set in the original Huailai County, where Tang Enbo was developing the strategy and plans for the battles. Since planes were very rare in China at that moment, the Japanese Army had no worries to send their planes to bomb the Huailai County before the Chinese defense on the ground was broken.

3.5 Northern Area

3.5.1 Yongning and Yanqing

The towns of Yongning and Yanqing are now located in the Yanqing County, Beijing. In the Nankou Campaign, these two towns were in the rear of the Chinese defense, garrisoned by the Chinese 94th Division.⁴⁹

48 Mr. Qiu Jiang, a reporter of the Da Gong Newspaper, had written an article “Frontline of Nankou”, in which the description of the location of Huailai met the geographical information provided in Google Earth. Gou 1962, 41.

49 Gou 1962, 10.

3.5.2 Chicheng

Chicheng, which means “the crimson fort”, is now located in Zhangjiakou, Hebei Province. It was around 60 to 70 kilometers away on the north of the main battlefield of Nankou Campaign. The Chinese 84th Division was defending Chicheng against the puppet troops from Manchukuo and Mongolia during the Nankou Campaign.⁵⁰

3.6 Withdrawal

The Yu County, as well as Guangling and Laiyuan Counties were the three destinations where the Chinese forces were supposed to move to after they were withdrawn. Yu County and Guangling were in Shanxi Province and Laiyuan was in Hebei Province.

50 Gou 1962, 11.

4 Chronology of the Campaign

4.1 A Preparation against Time

4.1.1.1 July 28 – 29

The Imperial Japanese Army moved their main force forward from the city of Beiping to the north and deployed around the town of Shahe and Changping in order to consolidate its control of the entire region around Beiping and Tianjin, which created a desperate situation for China.⁵¹ Meanwhile, the Chinese 13th Army was advanced to Zhangjiakou by General Tang Enbo, intending to rescue the defense at Nankou. However, Liu Ruming, governor of Chahar Province, misinterpreted the word "advance" in the message from 13th Army, and blocked the path so that 13th Army was prevented from moving to Nankou through Chahar. As a consequence, the 13th Army was delayed to prepare for the defense of Nankou for four days, which provided the Japanese invaders an opportunity to get well prepared for attacking Nankou.⁵²

4.1.1.2 July 30

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sent a telegram to Mao Shuke, telling him to urge General Tang Enbo to contact Governor Liu Ruming and destroy the railroad at Qinglongqiao, and demand the 84th Division to assist Tang's troops under the command of General Gao Guizi.⁵³ Lieutenant Colonel Gou Jitang, a staff member of 13th Army, got a message to a contact within the city of Zhang Yuan, and knowing the situation there, then got back and reported it to 13th Army on the same day:

General Liu is controlling approximately 20 regiments, whose faith was disrupted by the invaders with all sorts of tricks such as intimidation and bribery. An army with an undermined morale would not be efficient in the combat. Our troops also lack strength after

51 Gou 1962, 6.

52 Wang 1987, 2.

53 Telegram sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Mao Shuke on July 30th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 1.

having stationed separately around Fengzhen and Jining, where few obstacles are available for a defensive battle.⁵⁴

General Tang Enbo reported this situation to Generalissimo Chiang. Simultaneously, General Tang ordered staff Gou Jitang to continue to contact Liu Ruming with polite messages in order to persuade him to assist the defense of Nankou.⁵⁵

4.1.1.3 July 31

Chiang Kai-shek sent another telegram to Mao Shuke who was in Taiyuan, asking him to tell Tang Enbo and Gao Guizi to order their troops to dig wide and deep antitank ditches so that Japanese tanks and armored cavalries could not get through easily; in addition, Chiang also distributed 30,000 Yuan to their troops for army provisions.⁵⁶ On the same day, Chiang sent an order through telegram to Fu Zuoyi, Governor of Suiyuan Province, to demand him to urge Gao Guizi to reinforce the city of Zhang Jiakou, and ask him whether he would be willing to command Tang Enbo's troops.⁵⁷ Chiang also telegraphed Vice Commissioner Yan Xishan, asking him to transport Gao Guizi's 84th Division by train and deploy the troops in Zhangjiakou.⁵⁸ Another of Chiang's telegrams was sent to Taiyuan, and turned to Liu Ruming, explaining the situation of the isolated Chahar Province, due to the fall of Beiping and Tianjin, and asking him to contact Yan Xishan and Fu Zuoyi to reinforce the defense. In addition, Chiang stated that all governors in Beiping must be puppets of the Japanese Army since Beiping had fallen, and again he urged Gao Guizi and Tang Enbo to build fortifications and blow up the railroad.⁵⁹

54 Gou 1962, 6.

55 Gou 1962, 6.

56 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Mao Shuke on July 31st, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 1.

57 The Order Issued by Chiang Kai-shek to Fu Zuoyi on July 31st, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 2.

58 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Yan Xishan on July 31st, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 2.

59 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Liu Ruming on July 31st, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 2.

On that same day, July 31st, the 4th and 89th Division of the 13th Army was deployed near the towns of Jining and Fengzhen except for the troops that were guarding the headquarters.⁶⁰ A plan of the 89th Division was set to transport the troops to the battlefield by train. Tang Enbo arrived in Datong, Shanxi, and deliberated the strategy for the coming battles with Lu Zhonglin, Gao Guizi, Li Fuying, and other commanders at the headquarters of the 61st Army. Wang Zhonglian, commander of the 89th Division, Wu Shaozhou, chief of the 89th Division, and Lu Zhonglin got on board the train together.⁶¹

4.1.1.4 August 1

Chiang Kai-shek sent Liu Ruming another telegram and asked him to tell Lu Zhonglin the importance of the immediate demolition of the railroad at Qinglongqiao and Badaling. The 89th Division also started to be transported to Huailai and Nankou, when the Japanese air scouts were detected near the railway.⁶² Tang Enbo was appointed the highest executive officer of the 7th Army Group at the front on that day, and he started building fortifications.⁶³ General Tang ordered his troops to work day and night on the constructions that were supposed to be started on July 28th. Time was more limited after the construction was delayed by Liu Ruming because of his interpretation of the word “advance”.

4.1.1.5 August 2

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek telegraphed Liu Ruming again to urge him on the reinforcement. Liu Ruming, Tang Enbo and Gao Guizi held a confidential meeting at Guoleizhuang railway station. As Chiang Kai-shek ordered, Liu Ruming was responsible for the defense within and between the cities of Xianmalin, Shenweilai, and Changyutai⁶⁴; his main force should control Xuanhua and Zhangjiakou, and he should also send cavalry to safeguard

60 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 30.

61 Wang 1987, 7.

62 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 30.

63 Wang 1987, 3.

64 Due to the differences in the customs of various local areas, it is also named Changyutai sometimes.

Dushikou; the 84th Division was responsible for the defense of the area around Chicheng and Ningjiangbu under the command of Gao Guizi; One division of 13th Army was responsible for the defense within and between the towns of Jing'anbu, Yongning, Yanqing, and Nankou, another division would safeguard the area on the north of Shacheng as a reserve force. This plan was sent to Generalissimo Chiang by telegram. After the meeting, General Lu Zhonglin reached Zhangjiakou and discussed the strategy and tactics for the coming battle at Nankou with General Tang and Staff Gou.

Early in the morning on the next⁶⁵ day, when the train that General Wang Zhonglian originally took stopped at Xiahuayuan station to add water and coal; nine Japanese aircraft suddenly came to bomb. The first-class cabin, in which General Wang Zhonglian was supposed to stay in, was blown to ashes. Fortunately, General Wang got off and made room on his cabin for General Lu, and General Lu also got off before long. Thus, two Chinese core commanders occasionally escaped from this disaster.⁶⁶

This was the first time that the Japanese air force attacked the Beiping-Suiyuan railroad. Most Chinese soldiers had never seen any planes so they "fled in panic" to take cover, which was laughed at by the Japanese pilots. In addition to the bombing, the Japanese Army stated that Chinese force began to deploy their air fighters at Luoyang Airport after being bombed, and provided 5,000,000 Yuan to the Chinese Communist force to ask them to disrupt the Japanese forces in Manchukuo.⁶⁷

4.1.1.6 August 3

Generalissimo Chiang telegraphed an urgent message to Liu Ruming and Tang Enbo, explaining the importance of recapturing Zhangbei, and ordering them to blow up the railroad at Qinglongqiao and Badaling so that the Japanese Army would not be able to make any use of it.⁶⁸

65 According to the records taken by the Japanese Army at that time, the air raid was on August 3rd. General Wang Zhonglian of the Chinese Army said in his memoir that it should be August 2nd, which might be a mistake due to his blurred memory after decades.

66 Wang 1987, 5,8.

67 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 146,147.

68 Telegram sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Liu Ruming and Tang Enbo on August 3rd, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 4.

Separately, Generalissimo Chiang telegraphed Mao Shuke, telling him that 89th Division temporarily stopped on the west of Chaigoubu and was waiting for the consultation with Liu Rumeng in consideration of Liu's concern about the main force that was marching through his territory.⁶⁹

On the same day, the Chinese 89th Division began to take over the defense of the areas around Nankou and Yanqing from the 29th Army, among which the 529th Regiment replaced the 4th Regiment in the 143rd Division to defend at Nankou as planned. General Tang issued the plan for the operation and distributed missions for each division. The 89th Division would defend along the Great Wall from Nankou to Ningjiangbu as the front line; its headquarters should be set somewhere between Kangzhuang and Huailai, keeping Shifengshan, Huangyu and Longkou under surveillance and detecting the activities of the Japanese troops within these areas. Strongholds should be established at Nankou, Erdaoguan, Manling, Nanshan, Tianmenguan, Yingpankou, Jing'anbu, etc. And this division should build a stronger defensive line along Jüyongguan, Nankou, Yongning, Yanqing and Qinglongqiao. In addition, the 529th Regiment in the 265th Brigade was supposed to garrison at Nankou, Jüyongguan, Sulinkou, Tangyukou, Guangongling, and other places nearby. with the assistance of one engineering company; 530th Regiment with the exception of one battalion would garrison at Deshengkou; a battalion in the 530th Regiment would safeguard Qinglongqiao under the command of the 265th Brigade; the 267th Brigade lacking the 533rd Regiment would defend at Yanqing, Yongning, Jing'anbu, etc. with the cavalry company. The 533rd Regiment would be the chief reserve force, defending at Kangzhuang. Men Changchun, commander of the engineer battalion, would command a company to defend the mountain pass on the south of Chenjiabu and monitor Baiyangcheng. The independent group of the division would garrison at Yulinbu on the south of Kangzhuang. General Wang Zhonglian deeply sensed that the mission would be arduous, so he carefully observed and studied the terrain of this area so as to make a prudent plan.⁷⁰

69 Wang 1987, 3.

70 Wang 1987, 12.

4.1.1.7 August 4

Generalissimo Chiang told General Tang on the phone that the Japanese Army would first attack the area around Nankou with all its strength. He hoped that General Tang's troops would finish the fortifications soon because he was also anxious about the enemy threatening Rehe Province.⁷¹ As Generalissimo Chiang had predicted, the Nakatomi Squadron of the Japanese Air Force would bomb the armored trains of the Chinese 84th Division near Huailai and Xiahuayuan.⁷²

On that day, the military order distributing missions was transmitted to every regiment from the headquarters of the 89th Divisions in Huailai; and each regiment defended at its own position according to the mission. Commander Wang Zhonglian, vice commander Long Muhan of the division, and Chief of Staff Wu Shao Zhou investigated the terrain at Nankou and the mountains around it. Based on the differences of the condition of the equipment between the 89th Division who had just arrived and the 29th Army who had previously garrisoned at the same place, General Wang modified their tactics, making a more narrow front at Nankou and defending at the top of the mountains on the east and west sides of Nankou. After inspecting the terrain around Jüyongguan and Qinglongqiao, he also decided to implement an in-depth defense relying on the complicated terrain. At night, scouts of the 89th Division reported that a large group of Japanese infantry and cavalry in Changping were forcing the local Chinese villagers and citizens to construct the highway connecting Shahe and Changping; thousands of Japanese troops in Shahe, consisting of infantry, cavalry and artillery, also forced local civilians to build the highway between Shahe and Yangfang. Meanwhile, the Japanese Army was transporting its troops from Beiping to Shahe, and seven tanks in Shahe were moving forward to Changping. General Wang immediately noticed that the Chinese defense was weak on the right (west) wing, where there was a higher risk of being outflanked; so he slightly moved the defense to strengthen the right wing.⁷³

71 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo. Wang 1987, 14.

72 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 147.

73 Wang 1987, 13.

4.1.1.8 August 5

In the morning, General Wang went to Yanqing to review the terrain, and the construction of fortifications; then he went to Yongning to inspect the defense of the 534th Regiment, returning to the headquarters at Yulinbu in the rain in the afternoon. In the evening, he discussed military plans with the staff members, developing flexible tactics to overcome the enemies' attack.⁷⁴ In their efforts to control the Beiping-Suiyuan railroad, the Japanese invaders urgently required a battle to break the Chinese defense in this area.⁷⁵

4.1.1.9 August 6

Generalissimo Chiang clarified the strategic significance of Zhangbei to Lu Zhonglin, and ordered him to urge General Tang Enbo and Governor Liu Ruming to regain the control of Zhangbei immediately and blow up the railroad between Qinglongqiao and Nankou;⁷⁶ simultaneously, Generalissimo Chiang asked General Tang about the construction of fortifications at the front, and reminded him that the Japanese Army would vigorously attack Nankou soon, ordering Tang to focus on the western side of the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad and wait for the significant reinforcements which would arrive within half a month.⁷⁷ Before getting a response from General Tang, Generalissimo Chiang telegraphed General Tang to remind him to keep an eye on the enemy in Rehe and Duolun, and regain Zhangbei after assembling together with Li Xianzhou's 21st Division and Zhu Huaibing's 94th Division. Over 200 Japanese cavalry troops were patrolling near Shahe, and more troops were joining in.⁷⁸

74 Wang 1987, 14.

75 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 147.

76 The Order Issued by Chiang Kai-shek to Lu Zhonglin on August 6th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 5.

77 The Order Issued by Chiang Kai-shek to General Tang Enbo on August 6th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 5.

78 Telegram sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo on August 6th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 5,6.

4.1.1.10 August 7

Generalissimo Chiang telegraphed General Tang, suggesting that he should make “dummy” sites around the real positions, so that the Japanese air scouts would be confused and their reconnaissance would be disrupted; real positions should be camouflaged among the dummy sites.⁷⁹

Groups of Japanese mechanized forces were transported from Beiping to Nankou, including 30 tanks and 8 artillery teams; their cavalry groups engaged the Chinese defense several times and were repelled. Generalissimo Chiang was aware of the upcoming attack on Nankou by the Japanese Army, so again he commanded General Tang to blow up the railroad and tunnel at Qinglongqiao, and ordered him to report the status of Nankou to the National Military Commission.⁸⁰

The Chinese 89th Division centered its headquarters in Yulinbu, focusing on the defense in Yanqing, Chikou, Qinglongqiao, and Jüyongguan; a scallop-shaped telephone network was set up within that day between all locations. That network provided an unimpeded communication system without any interruption during the entire campaign until the Chinese Army retreated at the end.

Li Xian, commander of a brigade, reported to General Wang Zhonglian that the Chinese Army at the front had already engaged the Japanese force. General Wang returned to Jüyongguan to direct the battle as soon as he heard of this message. The Japanese invaders began to harass the Chinese defense with cavalries and artilleries at Deshengkou, Longhutai, Dahongmen, Nankou and other nearby places. Japanese air fighters also came to bomb the Chinese fortifications with small groups of three to five at Jüyongguan, Kangzhuang, Huailai, and some other places. The Chinese soldiers defended hard against the invaders, “同仇敵愾”. The invasion was repelled this time. General Wang figured out that the Japanese troops only came to explore the power of the Chinese defense on that day, and he believed that there would be a fierce battle on the next day. Thus, he set the command center at Jüyongguan and ordered his troops to build fortifications quickly, moving the train of supply forward to the Qinglongqiao

79 Telegram sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo and Xu Yongchang on August 7th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 6.

80 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 33,34.

railway station; Yulinbu was set as the headquarters at the rear of the 89th Division, responsible for the contact between Huailai, Yanqing, East and West Daling, Diaoming Lake, Huanglouyuan and nearby places.⁸¹ The 529th Regiment was famous for its brave and bold warriors, so it was responsible for the defense at the first front line in this campaign; the Commander Luo Fanggui sent the first battalion to defend at the town at Nankou and its right (west) wing; the 2nd Battalion was sent to defend Longhutai and the left (east) wing of Nankou; and the 3rd Battalion was the reserve force of the regiments, safeguarding the railroad. Hundreds of Japanese horsemen invaded the city of Changping and sneaked to Longhutai with over 20 armored vehicles for harassment and reconnaissance. Commander Luo anticipated that the Japanese force must head to Huyu Village in front of Nankou, so he urged his 2nd Battalion to remain alert.⁸²

81 Wang 1987, 16,17.

82 Wang, Zhonglian. *Recollection of the Military Expedition*. Vol. IV. Taipei: Wang Zhonglian, 1978. 4013.

4.2 Fierce Fighting for Eighteen Days

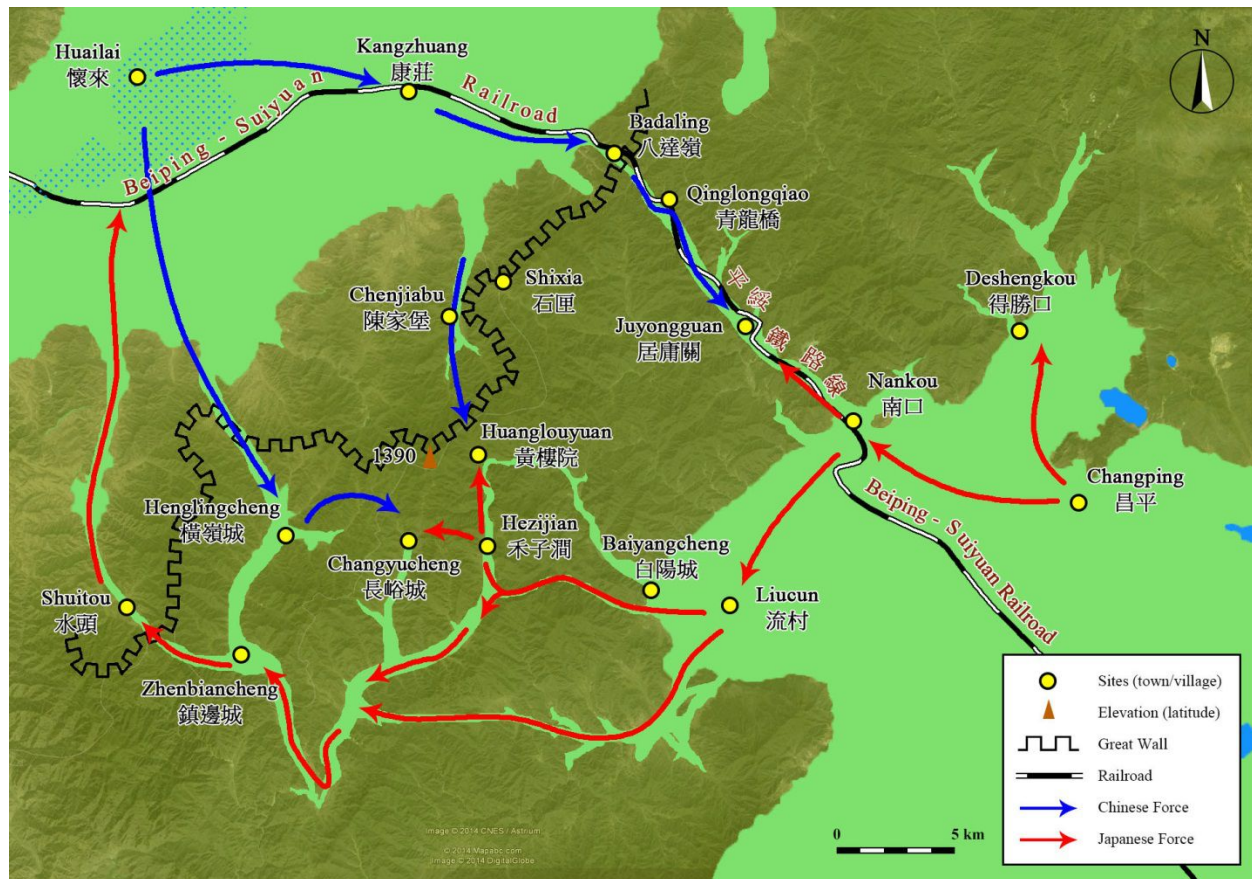


Fig. 4.1 the main Battlefield of the Nankou Campaign, showing the movement of the armies and locations of critical sites

4.2.1 The Contention for the Control of Nankou and Jüyongguan

4.2.1.1 August 8

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek telegraphed General Tang and other core commanders to supervise the defense preparation. The Japanese Army began to transport troops from Nanyuan to Changping by army lorries to attack the left (east) wing of the Chinese defense line.⁸³ The Nankou railway station, Longhutai, and Dahongmen were the earliest to be affected, being bombed by Japanese artillery and air force; the Chinese guards calmly evacuated from the defense and hid themselves at the back side of the mountain slope while the Japanese force was

⁸³ Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 30.

bombing; the guards were waiting for an opportunity to intercept the Japanese who came close. Therefore, the fortifications were damaged but the Chinese force only suffered slight casualties.⁸⁴ Simultaneously, about 500-600 Japanese horsemen with over 10 canons attacked Deshengkou.⁸⁵ The Chinese 530th Regiment fought hard to resist under the command of Tan Naida, killing 5 of the Japanese invaders and injuring 8 of them before they retreated. The Chinese force suffered 11 casualties. The Japanese invasion on that day still seemed to be an exploration to determine the power of the Chinese force. In coordination with harassment, the Japanese invaders launched bombing raids and sent scouts to attack Guo Lei Zhuang and Chaiguobu, aiming at attacking the Beiping-Suiyuan railroad secretly; they were repulsed by the railway guards under the command of Governor Liu Ruming.⁸⁶ August 8th has been considered as the beginning of the official Nankou Campaign.

4.2.1.2 August 9

At dawn, 5000 meters away in front of the Chinese defense, Japanese armored vehicles provided a cover for their engineers who were building the bridge. The Chinese Army repelled the Japanese troops several times; meanwhile, groups of Japanese troops harassed Huyu and Erdaoguan. With the assistance of an artillery regiment and several armored vehicles, Japanese Suzuki Multi-brigades attacked the Chinese at Nankou and Guangongling, then ground-strafed with 20 air scouts. The Chinese 529th Regiment fought effectively and defeated the invaders.⁸⁷

At noon, over a thousand Japanese troops with artillery and armored vehicles arrived in Changping; another thousand troops consisting of infantry and cavalry were prepared to attack the Chinese Army in three different routes. One group had already moved forward to Nankou and forced Chinese residents to build the highway from Changping to Yangfang. It was raining and roads were muddy. The Japanese vehicles were trapped in the mud 10 kilometers away from Changping to the west. They forced the Chinese civilian residents to help get the Japanese

84 Wang 1987, 18.

85 Meeting Minutes of Nankou Campaign. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 16.

86 Gou 1962, 12.

87 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 34,35;
Wang 1987, 13.

vehicles out of the mud, and the attack was suspended. The Chinese Army took this opportunity to attack the Japanese from the rear, to enhance their fortifications and camouflage, and to upgrade equipment for contact. At 3:00 p.m., over a hundred Japanese cavalry troops raided Longhutai; the Chinese troops resisted for three hours. The Japanese Army sent more troops to reinforce, and the battles became fierce.⁸⁸

In the night, over 400 Japanese cavalry outflanked the Chinese from Baiyangcheng to the west, and attempted to break the Chinese defense at some point between Sulinkou and Zhenbiancheng to attack their target of Huailai. Wu Shaozhou, chief of staff of the Chinese 89th Division, commanded a reorganized detachment, which consisted of the engineering battalion of the 89th Division, Liu Hanxing's Regiment in the 4th Division, and the 564th Regiment in the 94th Division, with 2 machine guns from the 533rd Regiment. These troops moved through East Daling, Diaoming Lake and Shidaoling, to resist the Japanese troops that were attacking Baiyangcheng.⁸⁹

4.2.1.3 August 10

Generalissimo Chiang sent a telegram to General Tang, urging him to destroy the tunnels along Badaling and Qinglongqiao and make sure that the restoration of the tunnels would take more than one year. He also reminded General Tang to get prepared to keep the troops safe from toxic gas launched by the Japanese Army, and to ensure the troops equipped with gas masks were able to practice.⁹⁰

At dawn, the Japanese Army with more than 10 cannons sent thousands of cavalry troops to the town of Nankou and the railway station, and the battle lasted for four hours; Huyu Village also suffered an onslaught. At 1:00 p.m., buildings and strongholds at Nankou were totally destroyed; Huyu Village was captured by the Japanese Army, but the mountains behind it were still under the control of the Chinese Army. The Japanese Army then sent over 500 cavalry troops to attack the Nankou railway station again; the Chinese defense troops fought hard to

88 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 34,35;
Gou 1962, 13.

89 Wang 1987, 26.

90 Telegram sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo on August 10th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 7,8.

resist, suffering heavy casualties. In order to avoid unnecessary casualties, the 6th Company of the Chinese 529th Regiment, which was the only force guarding at Nankou, was obliged to be drawn back to the main front, and the Nankou railway station fell. Simultaneously, at Kanglingjian and Erdaoguan on the north-east of Deshengkou, the Chinese troops repelled the enemy several times.⁹¹

Also on August 10th, at Shidaoling, the Chinese force commanded by Wu Shaozhou engaged the Japanese invaders at dawn. Both Chinese and Japanese forces suffered heavy casualties there, but the Japanese force was reinforced by more troops arriving at 1:00 p.m. Although the Chinese soldiers were not afraid of death at all, they were outnumbered by their enemy. Shidaoling fell; the Chinese force retreated to Diaoming Lake, and continued the confrontation against the Japanese. The Japanese invaders bombed Diaoming Lake with cannons, relying on their advantage of firepower, and then assaulted the town with infantry; both attacks were repelled. At 4:00 p.m., the Japanese invaders **sneaked** to Huanglouyuan. Chief of Staff Wu Shaozhou sideswiped and defeated these invaders from West Daling with the 4th Company of the 3rd Battalion in the 20th Regiment in 4th Division under his command. Then he ordered his troops to build fortifications at Diaoming Lake and Huanglouyuan, keeping the Japanese troops at Shidaoling under surveillance.⁹²

The Chinese 529th Regiment counterattacked the Japanese troops who had just captured Nankou but had not yet stabilized it. Nankou was controlled by the Chinese force again after 3 hours. After days of successive attacks at every Chinese stronghold from the left to the right, the Japanese force was increasing in number, and the attacks became actual operations rather than exploring the size of the Chinese defense. General Tang Enbo went to the command center of 89th Division at Badaling from Huailai, and then to Jüyongguan to inspect the terrain with General Wang Zhonglian. In addition, the Chinese troops placed defensive mines in front of their positions under General Tang's supervision, in case of the breakthrough of Japanese tanks.⁹³

91 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 35;
Wang 1987, 18.

92 Wang 1987, 26.

93 Gou 1962, 13.

At 7:00 in the evening, the 2nd company of the Engineering Battalion of Chinese 89th Division arrived at Diaoming Lake, monitoring the Japanese force at Yangfang.⁹⁴

4.2.1.4 August 11

At dawn, the Suzuki Division of the Japanese main force launched a mass attack on Nankou with over 2000 infantry and cavalry troops, more than 20 cannons, and 9 air fighters and bombers; another group of over 1000 troops with over 10 cannons attacked Deshengkou at 11:00 a.m.;⁹⁵ but both failed. In the afternoon, the Japanese division reinforced with over a thousand troops, attacked Huyu Village and Longhutai with armored vehicles, but was repelled by the Chinese defense power. The Japanese airplanes bombed again, and the Chinese soldiers struggled against the Japanese infantry and cavalry with their swords; this melee occurred over 10 times. At 3:00 in the afternoon, while the Japanese Army sent dozens of cavalry troops to assault Mabaoquan and Diaoming Lake, they were forced to retreat from Nankou, Huyu Village, Erdaoguan, and Deshengkou by sunset. The Chinese Army held their position and confronted the Japanese force. The Chinese Army suffered over 300 casualties, and the casualties of Japanese Army were double.⁹⁶

Guanziling had become a stronghold of the Chinese defense that the Japanese Army needed to control because of its higher altitude than the surrounding area. Since August 9th, the Japanese bombed this area with thousands of artillery shells to destroy the fortifications. However, the 529th Regiment of the Chinese Army held its position and seriously repelled the Japanese invaders, which was "really parallel to the eight hundred warriors' heroic behavior in defending the Sihang Warehouse in October within the same year (1937)."⁹⁷

94 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 35.

95 These numbers are provided by Gou Jitang's document in *The Battles around Nankou*. According to the *Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division*, the Japanese troops attacking Deshengkou included over 300 infantry, 100 cavalry, 8 air fighters and 8-12 tanks.

96 Gou 1962, 13,14.

97 Wang 1987, 22.

Early in the morning on the same day, General Wang Zhonglian ordered Wu Shaozhou to counterattack Shidaoling with his detachment around Diaoming Lake before the fog lifted.⁹⁸ The 3rd Battalion in Commander Yang Chao's 20th Regiment of the Chinese Army attacked Shidaoling from Huanglouyuan. At 9:00 in the morning, the two sides engaged each other; despite the heavy casualties, the Chinese warriors, due to their boosted morale, killed many invaders in the battle. Unfortunately, after Commander Yang sacrificed himself, the Japanese troops in Baiyangcheng came to reinforce, and the Chinese force was outnumbered. Thus, Wu Shaozhou had no choice but to draw his detachment back to recover. To consolidate the defense between East and West Daling, Chief of Staff Wu Shaozhou sent the engineering battalion to safeguard Diaoming Lake, and Liu Hanxing's Regiment of the 4th Division to defend the main stronghold at East and West Daling. The Chief of Staff then sent another group to establish a stronghold at Huanglouyuan and contact Fu Jingfang's Regiment of the 4th Division. All troops were required to build and strengthen the fortifications at night.⁹⁹

A couple of days had passed since the campaign broke out. Staff Officer Gou Jitang concluded:

all battles had broken out at the front of the 89th Division, the left (east) wing of the Chinese defense line, over the last few days; the 4th Division was responsible for the defense of Huailai; the 84th Division had not engaged in fierce battles, yet; General Zhu Huaibing, commander of the 94th Division telephoned on 11th: "The first group of his division is approaching Guoleizhuang, and the rest of the troops are supposed to get through Datong." The battles today further clarified that the campaign had entered an important stage. General Tang issued a message to encourage all soldiers in his army:

1. The campaign has officially started after fighting for four days. All compatriots should be clear about our responsibilities to serve our nation. Regardless of the enemy's overwhelming firepower, we ought to fight to the last stand in our position to manifest our gallantry and integrity.
2. All soldiers and commanders shall be rewarded for their achievement and punished for their mistakes; the ones who flinch shall be executed immediately.
3. Commanders at all levels should set good examples with their own behaviors and encourage their soldiers in proper ways.
4. Major Commanders should always keep an eye on the enemies' movements and attack them before they realized that they were being watched. It is better to attack them unawares, especially in the night. Thus, we can expend fewer troops.¹⁰⁰

98 According to the *Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division*, that day was sunny.

99 Wang 1987, 26,27.

100 Gou 1962, 14.

4.2.1.5 August 12

At 7:00 a.m., the Japanese Army sent another 5,000 infantry, 50-60 artillery, and 20-30 armored vehicles to launch a comprehensive attack on the areas around Deshengkou, Huyu, Nankou, and Sulinkou in coordination with their air force; this created the fiercest battle by that day, in which both sides fought for the position six times. Simultaneously, the main force of the Japanese Army mobilized and outflanked to the right (west) wing of the Chinese defensive position: one group came to assault Baiyangcheng, Jiugang, and Hezijian with a combination of over 1000 infantry and cavalry, confronting the 19th Regiment of the Chinese 4th Division and starting a battle; another group of about 2000-3000 troops moved forward along Mentougou and Qingbaikou to Mahuangyu. General Wang Zhonglian sent Chief of Staff Wu Shaozhou to supervise the battle around Sulinkou and Henglingcheng.¹⁰¹

At 3:00 in the afternoon, 20 Japanese armored vehicles broke into Nankou, and at the end, an entire platoon of the Chinese Army had fallen in the battle.¹⁰² By 8:00 p.m., the Japanese Army had taken over control of Nankou.¹⁰³ General Wang ordered the 529th and 533rd Regiments to wait for an opportunity to counterattack. In the evening, the Chinese force destroyed 6 Japanese tanks with antitank guns when the tanks could not move in darkness. Commander Luo of the 529th Regiment led the 7th and 9th Companies of the 3rd Battalion of the regiment fought hand-to-hand combat against the Japanese invaders, killing over 200 Japanese soldiers¹⁰⁴ with swords. Long Guiquan, the commander of the 7th Company, sacrificed himself in the battle, and few soldiers of this company survived. The Japanese intruders were still not able to break through the defense around Nankou. The Chinese Army had their morale boosted despite their heavy casualties of over 1000.¹⁰⁵

At about 12 o'clock midnight, over 20 trains arrived at Nankou from Changping, carrying Japanese troops of the Sakai Combined Brigade; these troops disembarked at Nankou, and started to attack the Chinese military positions. Meanwhile, the Japanese Army kept transporting

101 Gou 1962, 14.

102 Wang 1987, 19.

103 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 149.

104 Wang Zhonglian said it was over 300 in his memoir. Wang 1987, 19.

105 Gou 1962, 14.

ammunition and the wounded between Changping and Nankou with lorries. The Chinese scouts found that the Japanese Army was mobilizing 70-80 heavy artillery and dozens of vehicles at the Nankou railway station; unfortunately, the Chinese Army did not have long-range artillery or a powerful air force. So there was nothing the Chinese Army could do to destroy these mechanized Japanese troops but to keep alert and wait for a chance when the Japanese invaders got close.¹⁰⁶

During the desperate battle, General Tang sent General Wang and Commander Luo a telegram: "We are responsible for the survival of our nation. Now it's the time for us to take our revenge on the enemies with our blood..." The Chinese soldiers were encouraged by the General's words and dedicated their lives to the battle against the Japanese invaders.¹⁰⁷

General Tang sent a brigade in the 4th Division to defend at Henglingcheng under the command of General Wang Wanling, the commander of Chinese 4th Division, in case the Japanese Army outflanked to the right (west) side. These troops got ready to intercept the invaders from Baiyangcheng and eliminate them in front of the Chinese defensive positions in coordination with the Chinese 89th Division. General Wang Wanling sent the 10th Brigade under the command of Ma Liwu to intercept the enemy at Hezijian; the 3rd battalion of 19th Regiment in the 10th Brigade fought against the Japanese force at Jiugangban, Hezijian for half a day, repelling 600-700 invaders backwards a few kilometers, which slightly reduced the threat on the right (west) wing of the Chinese defense.¹⁰⁸ On the same day, Liu Hanxing's Regiment in Wu Shaozhou's detachment only found the Japanese cavalry moving and did not engage in a firefight.¹⁰⁹

4.2.1.6 August 13

In the night between August 12th and 13th, two trains of Japanese troops reached Nankou and kept attacking the Chinese defensive position around Nankou as soon as they disembarked.¹¹⁰ Before dawn on the 13th, over 500 Japanese infantry covered by over 10 tanks

¹⁰⁶ Wang 1987, 19,20.

¹⁰⁷ Gou 1962, 14.

¹⁰⁸ Gou 1962, 14.

¹⁰⁹ Wang 1987, 27.

¹¹⁰ Gou 1962, 14,15.

broke into the town of Nankou. The Chinese 89th Division resisted several times, shooting the invaders with machine guns from the mountains on two sides of Nankou. The Japanese troops could not get any further. At dawn, over 200 Japanese infantry and cavalry harassed (attack) Kanglingjian and were repulsed; at 9:00, the Japanese air force dropped more than 10 bombs at the Chinese positions in Deshengkou. From 10:00 in the morning, the Japanese artillery bombed Nankou again for five hours with over 5000 bombs, but their attack was still repelled by the Chinese defensive power with machine guns and hand grenades. The Chinese Army suffered terrible casualties. The 533rd Regiment of the Chinese Army came to reinforce at 3:00 p.m. and started to consolidate the fortification on the mountain on the right (west) side of Nankou.¹¹¹

Although the Chinese 529th Regiment defeated the invaders over a few days, it was getting exhausted in number without reinforcement but still maintained its position. General Tang sent a telegram to encourage all commanders and soldiers in his army:

Brother Luo Fanggui of the 529th Regiment, you are leading your regiment to defeat overwhelming enemies for days, inspiring the entire Chinese Army and having created a positive condition for our final victory. The control of Nankou will influence whether we will be successful in our national war of resistance against Japan; although the enemies are cruel, relying on their overwhelming weaponry, they cannot destroy all our positions in this area. Our advantages are our braveness and boldness instead of high-quality weaponry, so we cannot leave our positions when we are alive, not even a step. Our lives can be hardly longer than 100 years before we die; real heroes should die on the battlefield for the glory of a warrior. Please encourage all soldiers to struggle for our victory!

General Wang Jieren (Zhonglian) of the 89th Division, Commander Li Xian's brigade in your division defeated the enemies several times over these days and we are closer to the victory, which is inspiring news! Our nation will be saved by our sacrifice; otherwise, it will fall, owing to our cowardice; so we have to fight to the death to defend our positions without the hope of survival.¹¹²

The Chinese soldiers figured out the regular pattern of the Japanese attack. When the Japanese artillery and air force bombed the positions, the Chinese soldiers moved back and took cover in the terrain; when the Japanese troops got close, the Chinese soldiers counterattacked with machine guns and hand-grenades, or even blades/swords sometimes. The Chinese soldiers in the 529th Regiment struggled for their lives but no one had expected to survive; those who got

111 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 36.

112 Gou 1962, 15.

light injuries soon came back to their positions and continued to fight after simply having their wounds bandaged.¹¹³

The Japanese Army was still failing to capture Nankou in spite of their overwhelming firepower from their artillery and air force. They outflanked to the right (west) wing of the Chinese defense, attempting to find a weak point near Henglingcheng where they could break through. The Japanese troops attacking Huanglouyuan and Diaominghu were repulsed by the 20th Regiment in 10th Brigade of the Chinese Army. But another 1,000 Japanese invaders from Baiyangcheng outflanked to Gaoyakou, moving to Mabaoquan for an invasion. The Chinese 20th Regiment was obliged to return to defend Hezijian.¹¹⁴ In the evening, the Chinese 89th Division drew back the engineer battalion from Wu Shaozhou's detachment and sent it to demolish the railroad between Jüyongguan and Qinglongqiao, since the situation around Nankou was becoming worse. Liu Hanxing's Regiment took over the defense of the position of Wu Shaozhou's detachment.¹¹⁵

On that day, the Songhu Campaign broke out in Shanghai. The Japanese Army, Navy and Air Force fiercely attacked Shanghai. Generalissimo Chiang could no longer focus on the north, so he telegraphed Fu Zuoyi, ordering him to recapture the north of Chahar and assist General Tang Enbo to defend the area around Nankou.¹¹⁶

4.2.1.7 August 14

The leading troops of Li Xianzhou's 21st Division arrived at Kangzhuang; Zhu Huaibing's 94th Division arrived in Yongning and Yanqing, reinforcing the defense at the battlefield.¹¹⁷ Generalissimo Chiang also telegraphed General Tang, telling him that three divisions were on the way to reinforce the defense around Nankou from Laiyuan in Yi County under the command

113 Gou 1962, 15.

114 Gou 1962, 15.

115 Wang 1987, 27.

116 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Fu Zuoyi on August 14th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 8.

117 Wang 1987, 9.

of General Wei Lihuang, and asking General Tang to boost the morale to hold their position and wait for the reinforcements.¹¹⁸

On that day, over 100 Japanese artillery kept bombing the mountains on the left and right side of Nankou for 7-8 hours, destroying the fortifications of the Chinese defense. Later, Japanese infantry and tanks attacked the position of the 1st battalion of the Chinese 529th Regiment on the right (west) side of Nankou under the cover of their air force, but failed. Soon, dozens of Japanese tanks attacked Nankou, breaking through the Chinese defense power's position with an overwhelming number of troops. The Japanese troops got close to Jüyongguan along the highway, threatening the rear positions of the Chinese defense power. Fortunately, the in-depth positions of the Chinese Army around Jüyongguan were extraordinarily sturdy, and the Chinese soldiers fought hard against the invaders; the invading Japanese troops were repulsed. Both armies suffered heavy casualties. After dusk, the Japanese Army had its reinforcement transported by two trains from Beiping.¹¹⁹

Another group of Japanese invaders was defeated at Henglingcheng; they retreated to Baiyangcheng and then moved to Mabaoquan together with their reinforcement from Gaoyakou, attempting to attack the Chinese position at Hezijian. But due to the diversionary actions of the Chinese 4th Division, both armies were contained at Shidaoling with no further progress.¹²⁰

The situation of the Japanese Army around East and West Daling did not change on that day; the 10th Brigade of the Chinese 4th Division was responsible for the defense in this area under the command of Ma Liwu. General Wang Zhonglian of the Chinese 89th Division drew back Chief of Staff Wu Shaozhou to Kangzhuang, and commanded Liu Hanxing's Regiment in the 21st Division and the 564th Regiment in the 94th Division to defend at Zhenziling and safeguard the 15-kilometers gap between East Daling and Yangjuanzi. At night, the Chinese 89th Division came out to attack the Japanese troops in the area between Nankou and Jüyongguan. After more than 10 strikes, they annihilated over 430 Japanese intruders, seized 32 heavy machine guns, and destroyed 5 Japanese tanks.¹²¹

118 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Fu Zuoyi on August 14th, 1937. Wang 1987, 27.

119 Wang 1987, 20,21.

120 Gou 1962, 16.

121 Wang 1987, 27.

4.2.1.8 August 15

By this day, the Chinese 89th Division had inflicted heavy casualties on the Japanese intruders over night; then they got a chance to drive the Japanese intruders out of Nankou and prepared to counterattack the intruders on the mountains beside Nankou. However, a Japanese regiment suddenly came to reinforce; the Chinese force was outnumbered and had to head back to defend at its positions. All regiments in the 89th Division suffered terrible casualties in this battle, especially the 529th and 533rd Regiments. Survivors still had a strong desire to fight in order to avenge.¹²²

The Japanese also complained about their hardship in this battle, emphasizing that the terrain at Jüyongguan was a natural barrier. However, it is not all correct. The ancient fortifications at Jüyongguan were built to defend against the north and had no advantage when facing to the south; moreover, since the Japanese Army came to attack Nankou from the south, their supplies had never been cut off, so they should not have been "eating roots of grass and throwing stones as weapon"¹²³ as they recorded.

On the same day, the Japanese force that outflanked to Henglingcheng deployed over 1000 troops and 7-8 canons to assault Laoyugou and Hezijian from Guodingshan, and they attacked the Chinese position at the 850 Elevation when they got the chance,¹²⁴ but were later repulsed by the 19th and 20th Regiment in the 10th Brigade in the Chinese 4th Division. One of the Japanese planes that flew at a low altitude was knocked down by the 8th Battalion and the machine-gun 3rd Battalion of the Chinese 19th Regiment.¹²⁵

The Japanese Army could not capture Nankou and Jüyongguan quickly despite their advantages in number and weaponry, so it started to bomb Huailai with air forces in order to destroy the headquarters of the Chinese Army. Fortunately, the path connecting the headquarters of the Chinese Army was built along the foot of the town walls of Huailai and remained undamaged, and the communication facilities were also in good conditions. However, due to the bombing on the railroad, launched by the Japanese air force behind the Chinese defense line, the

122 Gou 1962, 16.

123 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 150,151.

124 Wang 1987, 28.

125 Gou 1962, 16.

transportation of the Chinese reinforcement was slowed down; the 21st Division could only have one regiment (1300-1400 soldiers) transported to the front. The Chinese force was weakened critically for it could not deploy all troops at one time.¹²⁶

4.2.2 The Battles between Nankou and Henglingcheng

4.2.2.1 August 16

There was an especially heavy fog on this day. At dawn, the Japanese heavy artillery bombed the mountain on the east of Nankou where the 2nd Battalion of the Chinese 529th Regiment defended for three hours. Later, more than 30 Japanese tanks which provided cover for 600 infantry assaulted Huyu Village, while the Japanese artillery was bombing the position of the Chinese 533rd Regiment at Jüyongguan until 3:00 p.m. At dusk, the Japanese Army attacked again; the Chinese Army defended stoically, and the Japanese invaders lurked again.¹²⁷

So far, the Chinese and Japanese forces shared the battlefield around Nankou equally. Although the town of Nankou was occupied by the Japanese Army, the mountains on its two sides were recaptured by the Chinese Army after much combat, so the Japanese Army could not move forward deeply into the Guan Valley. The Japanese Army had been outflanking to the west and moving their main force to Henglingcheng for days, attempting to attack the Chinese Army by surprise. So far, the intensity of the fighting in front of Nankou was mitigated slightly, and Henglingcheng had become the key position that both the Chinese and Japanese forces fought for.¹²⁸

In order to block the gap in the defense between Nankou and Henglingcheng, General Tang had moved the 564th Regiment in Zhu Huaibing's 94th Division from Yanqing to Chenjiabu to consolidate and enhance the defense; this regiment and the 122nd Regiment from the 21st Division were reorganized into a detachment and defended around the south-east of Chadaocheng commanded by Wu Shaozhou, reconnecting with the defense at Chenjiabu. (See

126 Gou 1962, 16,17.

127 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 37.

128 Gou 1962, 17.

figure 4 in Gou Jitang's Record)¹²⁹ When the Japanese Army was intercepted by Wu Shaozhou Detachment when trying to attack Huanglouyuan again, their attack failed.¹³⁰ The 700-800 Japanese invaders from Nankou attempted to attack Huanglouyuan and Anzi Temple in several groups, but were repulsed by Liu Hanxing's 20th Regiment in the 10th Brigade in the Chinese 4th Division.¹³¹

Although the main Japanese force was gradually moved to the west, the battles around Nankou had not stopped. More than 1000 bombs were launched by the Japanese artillery.

4.2.2.2 August 17

The Japanese Army attacked Jüyongguan. The Chinese 533rd Regiment held their position, suffering a casualty of over half of its troops.¹³²

General Tang was concerned about the weakness on the right (west) wing of the Chinese defense, so he ordered Commander Shi Jue to return his 12th Brigade to the 4th Division at Henglingcheng. The 123th Regiment in the 6th Brigade in the Chinese 21st Division took over the responsibility for the defense of Huailai under the command of Regimental Commander Ma.¹³³

The Japanese invaders outflanking from Nankou to Henglingcheng deployed over 3000 infantry, artillery, and planes to assault the position of Fu Jingfang's Chinese 19th Regiment in the valley at Hezijian. They attempted to cut off the Chinese defense along the Great Wall and disconnect Henglingcheng from Nankou. This group of Japanese invaders moved forward to the north and attacked the Chinese position at 850 Elevation, fighting for 3 hours; the combat ended in a stalemate and neither the Chinese nor the Japanese force could defeat the other. Later, over 1000 Japanese troops came to reinforce; while the Chinese 19th Regiment was trapped in the combat around 850 Elevation, another group of Japanese troops broke into Great Wall Pass at

129 Gou 1962, 17.

130 Wang 1987, 28.

131 Gou 1962, 17.

132 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 37.

133 Gou 1962, 17. The “113th Regiment” in the source book may probably be a typo.

Huanglouyuan. Ni Zuyao's 23rd Regiment in the Chinese 12th Brigade rushed to reinforce the defense, rearranging their positions along 850 Elevation, Hezijian, West Liang, Huangtuwa, East Liang and Jushuituo; one battalion of this regiment moved to the back side of the Japanese intruders and intercepted them, threatening their rear. The battle fell into another stalemate when the Japanese troops became exhausted.¹³⁴ However, more Japanese troops came to reinforce. The Wu Shaozhou Detachment at Shixia and the 10th Brigade in the 4th Division at Huanglouyuan in danger of defeat, and the beacon tower of the Great Wall on the east of 850 Elevation fell to the Japanese force.¹³⁵

In the evening, over 2000 Japanese troops moved along the valleys from Sulinkou to Yangjuanzi, which is eight kilometers away from Qinglongqiao on the south-west, attempting to capture the area at the rear of Jüyongguan defended by the 267th Brigade in the Chinese 89th Division and to destroy the core of the Chinese defense. General Wang Zhonglian and Brigadier Lai Ruxiong believed that the control of Yangjuanzi was critical for the survival of Jüyongguan, so the intruders must be eliminated. As General Wang planned, the 121st Regiment in the Chinese 21st Division was sent to capture the position on the right side of the river under the command of Lai Ruxiong, then to besiege the Japanese intruders with the Chinese 267th Brigade; the threat would be removed. Unfortunately, the Japanese reinforcement of about 3000-4000 troops came to attack the Chinese force in the heavy fog, and the situation became worse for the Chinese defense power.¹³⁶

When the right (west) wing of the Chinese defense was threatened, 500-600 puppet troops of the Japanese Army in Rehe Province made a feint attack at Dushikou under the command of Major KoToshio, but were soon repulsed by the 501st Regiment of the Chinese 84th Division. Lieutenant Uma-sho Yoshinari of the Japanese artillery and 7 Japanese soldiers were shot; 8 commanders, 13 soldiers, 8 horses and 45 rifles of the Japanese Army were seized by the Chinese 84th Division who also suffered 15 casualties.¹³⁷

134 Gou 1962, 17.

135 Wang 1987, 28.

136 Gou 1962, 17,18.

137 Gou 1962, 17.

4.2.2.3 August 18

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sent several telegrams to General Tang, telling him that it was possible to hold the position and wait for the reinforcements from Fangshan and Zhuolu commanded by General Wei Lihuang. Generalissimo Chiang hoped that General Tang could hold for a few more days until General Wei's reinforcements arrived; he emphasized that Huailai was the most critical place that should not fall, even if other positions might be hard to hold.¹³⁸

The Japanese Army had never stopped attacking the positions of the Chinese defense power around Nankou since the beginning of the campaign. Deshengkou was bombed by the Japanese artillery and air forces again on August 18th. The Chinese force could only rely on the terrain of the mountains they were familiar with and counterattack the Japanese invaders with this advantage. Sometimes they even needed to defend with hand-to-hand combat, and the Japanese force could still not capture a position on any of those mountains. For the Japanese army, this was probably the largest battle in mountains they had ever experienced.¹³⁹

When the fog lifted at dawn, more than 10 Japanese air fighters, covering their infantry and cavalry, started to attack the Chinese defense power fiercely around Yangjuanzi. The Chinese soldiers defended their positions with their own bodies against the Japanese planes and tanks under the command of General Wang and Brigadier Lai; the combat was unprecedentedly severe. The 124th Regiments of the Chinese 21st Division came to reinforce at the right side of the position of the 121st Regiment, slightly relieving the intensity. General Tang promised a reward of 10,000 Yuan to those who would recapture Yangjuanzi and the positions on the west bank of the river, hoping that it would boost the morale of the Chinese Army. The Chinese soldiers fought for four hours without expecting to survive and took back control of the high land on the west of the river, eliminated 631 Japanese invaders, and also suffered over 800 casualties. Yangjuanzi had not been recaptured, yet, but the superiority of the Japanese Army was reduced.

At 7:00 p.m., General Wang of the Chinese 89th Division sent a group of commandos to counterattack the invaders who attempted to sneak to the back side of Jüyongguan on the day before. The Chinese commandos avoided the invaders to ambush them in the valley of Sulinkou.

138 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo on August 18th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 11,12.

139 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 151.

The Japanese troops failed to capture Jüyongguan and were ambushed when retreating through Sulinkou. Platoon Leader Du of the Chinese commandos ordered his soldiers to stay silent until over half of the Japanese troops got through, and then suddenly strike them with hand grenades. The Japanese invaders were scared by the unexpected attack and fled in a hurry. The Chinese commandos gained 4 horses, 17 rifles and 29 heads of the Japanese invaders in this battle.¹⁴⁰

After Brigadier Shi Jue returned with his 12th Brigade to the Chinese 4th Division at Henglingcheng, General Wang Wanling of the Chinese 4th Division sent the 10th and 12th Brigades to counterattack Huanglouyuan according to General Tang's order. Brigadier Shi brought Jiang Dangyi's 24th Regiment to reinforce the position on the north of Huanglouyuan in coordination with the 10th Brigade and Wu Shaozhou Detachment. These three groups of the Chinese Army besieged the Japanese invaders at Huanglouyuan and Tumuyao, reaching a stalemate at Beiqiling and Laoyugou. The Chinese Army suffered heavy casualties and found it hard to recapture the position. When the 1st battalion of the Chinese 19th Regiment was fighting against the Japanese force at Aoyugou, the Japanese air force and artillery came to bomb this area; the Chinese battalion at the defense suffered terrible casualties and the survivors were less than 1/3 of the entire battalion;¹⁴¹ Zhou Gui, the commander of a squad in this battalion, held his position until he died of his injuries. The Chinese force had not recaptured Huanglouyuan, but it still fiercely struck the Japanese intruders and forced them to switch into a defensive status.¹⁴²

4.2.2.4 August 19

Generalissimo Chiang telegraphed General Tang, ordering him to defend tenaciously and wait for the reinforcements led by General Wei Lihuang, which would arrive on the 21st or 22nd; Generalissimo Chiang also reminded General Tang that the advantages of the Japanese Army in their weaponry and tactics would be weakened in the mountains, which would provide the Chinese Army an opportunity to strike back.¹⁴³

140 Wang 1987, 24.

141 According to Wang Zhonglian, no one in this battalion survived. Wang 1987, 29.

142 Gou 1962, 18.

143 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo on August 19th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 12.

Prior to the dawn, both sides already started to attack each other; the severity was beyond description. Commanders of the Chinese 4th, 31st and 89th Divisions coordinated with each other. Chen Daqing, Vice Commander of the 4th Division, led his troops to encircle and eliminate the invaders within several sectors. The Japanese force at Yangjuanzi was repulsed. According to the uniforms of the 250 corpses of the Japanese soldiers and commanders including Lieutenant Colonel Kawaguchi and Captain Kuwata, the Chinese Army knew that they were the troops of the Japanese 38th Regiment. The Chinese Army suffered over 400 casualties, but they got 8 light machine guns and 53 rifles from the Japanese force.¹⁴⁴

Early in the morning, the Japanese planes bombed Jüyongguan first, and then several Japanese tanks attacked the Chinese 533rd Regiment's position on the right of Jüyongguan with 500-600 infantry but were repulsed by the Chinese defense power under the command of Li Shouzheng. To avoid being surrounded by the Japanese force, the 7th battalion of the Chinese 530th Regiment came to reinforce. The Japanese force broke into the Chinese position in the afternoon, but soon it was recaptured by the 2nd battalion of the Chinese 533rd Regiment. Later, the main force of the Japanese 38th Regiment attacked Jüyongguan with the cover of their tanks and artillery; in addition, they launched toxic bombs this time, and the Chinese defense power was endangered. Major Na, commander of a battalion of the Chinese 533rd, led his troops to combat the intruders with swords; the Japanese soldiers lost their advantage in the melee, and retreated. Almost all the positions of the Chinese 533rd Regiments were destroyed by the Japanese tanks and artillery; three commanders of companies sacrificed their lives, and more than half of the soldiers in Major Na's battalion died or were wounded in the combat. The casualties of the Japanese force doubled.¹⁴⁵

The 10th Brigade in the Chinese 4th Division defended firmly at their positions around Huanglouyuan, East Daling and West Daling¹⁴⁶. The 12th Brigade moved to the East from Henglingcheng; Wu Shaozhou Detachment moved to the south-west from Shixia; the 10th Brigade moved to the south from Huanglouyuan. All these troops started to attack the Japanese

144 Gou 1962, 18.

145 As Wang Zhonglian said, the two Japanese commanders, Lieutenant Colonel Kawaguchi and Captain Kuwata, were killed in this battle instead of the battle at Yangjuanzi mentioned in the previous paragraph. Wang 1987, 31.

146 In Gou Jitang's records, it was written as East and West Badaling, which should be a typo. Gou 1962, 18.

force at the north of 850 Elevation and 710 Elevation at 4:00 a.m. During the battle, the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Japanese 12th Regiment arrived to reinforce. Both armies struggled around Huanglouyuan, Hezijian, Shaguopu, Yuanjiayao and 850 Elevation and fought over 10 times; The Chinese defense power finally repelled the Japanese force and blocked the gap of the defense at Huanglouyuan. The Japanese intruders then launched many toxic bombs to the Chinese position at the east of 850 Elevation. The Chinese defense power incurred casualties and was unable to counterattack. Lieutenant Colonel Liu Fanggui, commander of the 122nd Regiment in the Chinese 4th Division, fell in the battle; Wang Han, commander of the 1st battalion, and Liu Yaonan, commander of the 3rd battalion of the 19th Regiment in the Chinese 4th Division, were gravely wounded. The Chinese force suffered 1240 casualties in this battle, seizing 14 light machine guns, 134 rifles, 5 rocket launchers, 7 swords and 2 pistols from the Japanese troops; the Japanese suffered casualties nearly twice of the Chinese.¹⁴⁷

Fu Zuoyi, commander of the Chinese 7th Army Group, said in his telegram that the 72nd Division had nearly arrived at the front under the command of Chen Changjie, and the rest of the troops reached Damiao. According to the former plan, the 72nd Division was going to reinforce the defense at Nankou after attacking the rear of the Japanese Army in Zhangbei. However, General Chen made the north of Chahar his secondary target to reinforce, in order to assist the Chinese 13th Army to rescue the endangered front line around Nankou first.¹⁴⁸ Zhang Shuzhen's 416th Regiment in the Chinese 72nd Division had already arrived in Huailai when the telegram was sent.¹⁴⁹

The reinforcement of the Chinese Army was delayed by the weak transportation of the Beiping-Suiyuan Railroad, with only one or two regiments arriving on every single day. In that period, the capacities of the Chinese military units were small; there were less than 1500 troops in one regiment, and some military units were not complete. However, the casualties reached 1,000 - 2,000 every day, which could not be recovered by the reinforcements. The Chinese force was dwindling.¹⁵⁰ On that day (August 19), the 123rd and 124th Regiments in the Chinese 21st

147 Gou 1962, 18.

148 Telegram Sent by Fu Zuoyi to Tang Enbo on August 19th, 1937. Gou 1962, 18.

149 Gou 1962, 18.

150 Gou 1962, 18,19.

Division arrived at Jüyongguan and Qinglongqiao to reinforce the defense under the command of the 89th Division.¹⁵¹

The Japanese Army only needed to break one point on the Chinese defense line, so they could deploy and move their troops to wherever they felt it was easy to attack. In addition, the Japanese force had powerful reinforcements constantly arriving, including the 5th Division who arrived on that day under the command of Itagaki.¹⁵²

On the same day, about 300 - 400 Japanese troops broke through the Great Wall pass at 910 Elevation on the north of Huanglouyuan, attempting to attack Kangzhuang and Huailai. General Li Xianzhou, commander of the Chinese 21st Division, led the 63rd Brigade (without the 124th and 126th Regiments) to rescue the Great Wall pass, moving along Ganzhuangzi, North Chenjiabu and South Chenjiabu. He also ordered Vice commander Huang to move the 126th Regiment via Dongzhuangzi, Yangzhuangzi and Yaojiahe to Chenjiabu as the combat reserve. At 2:00 p.m., General Li occupied the position on the Great Wall with the 125th Regiment and repelled the intruders. The gap was blocked and the positions on the east and west sides along the Great Wall connected with General Li's troops.¹⁵³

4.2.3 Defense Broken, the Rear Threatened

4.2.3.1 August 20

The heavy rain and fog slightly relieved the intensity of the battles. No large-scaled battle broke out around Nankou or Deshengkou on that day, but the Japanese Army never stopped harassing with small squads.¹⁵⁴ General Tang understood that instead of being defeated, the Japanese Army was preparing for another massive attack. General Fu Zuoyi, the highest commander of the Chinese 7th Army Group, urged Chen Changjie and Ma Yanshou to bring the 72nd Division and the Independent 7th Brigade respectively to Huailai, while he moved to

151 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 45.

152 Gou 1962, 18,19.

153 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 46.

154 Wang 1987, 29.

Huailai himself from Datong for the military conference. Conferees included General Tang Enbo, General Zhang Xuezhong (Chief of Staff of the Chinese 13th Army), General Zhu Huaibing, General Chen Changjie in the 7th Army Group, as well as some other commanders of the Chinese Army. It was decided that the 72nd Division and Independent 7th Brigade would attack the Japanese troops that had broken into Huanglouyuan; and, after recapturing Guodingshan and Beiqiling, they would be positioned to defend at these places. The reinforcements would be drawn back to Zhangyuan in order to get control of Zhangbei. General Tang then reorganized the troops according to General Fu's order, sending the 72nd Division to Henglingcheng as the main force to retake Beiqiling on the east; he sent the Independent 7th Brigade to Kangzhuang to attack the Japanese invaders at Diaoming Lake from Chenjiabu. These two forces would coordinate with the 4th Division to eliminate the Japanese invaders at Huanglouyuan.¹⁵⁵ Brigadier Lü Ruiying and Liang Chunpu commanded the 415th and 433rd Regiments in the 72nd Division to defend along the Great Wall around Henglingcheng. Realizing that the terrain of that area was different from the sketch map, General Chen went to the position of the 416th Regiment in the valley along the Great Wall with his cavalry and artillery to get the accurate maps drawn by Zhang Shuzhen, commander of the 416th Regiment, according to his survey.¹⁵⁶

Zhangyuan was bombed by Japanese planes and artillery, and then attacked by 60 tanks and more than 1,000 infantry. The Chinese defense power suffered heavy casualties, and the camps and the radio station were destroyed. The Chinese soldiers struggled to hold their position while requesting reinforcements from General Fu.¹⁵⁷

155 Gou 1962, 19,20.

156 Based on the same battles described by different narrators, General Chen Changjie always provided a date that was two days earlier than the others'. Chen 1986, 170.

157 A Brief Summary of the Battles of the Chinese 68th Army (reorganized from the 142nd Division) in Zhangyuan. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 57; Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 155.

4.2.3.2 August 21

Generalissimo Chiang asked He Yingqin about the number of gas masks in storage, and ordered him to distribute all the masks to General Tang's troops around Nankou.¹⁵⁸ He was concerned the Japanese Army would deploy chemical weapons again.

At dawn, the Japanese main force started to attack Henglingcheng;¹⁵⁹ meanwhile, the Chinese forces at Jüyongguan, Qinglongqiao and Deshengkou made a feint at the Japanese.¹⁶⁰

The Japanese Army attacked Henglingcheng in three groups from different directions: of the two main forces including 4,000 - 5,000 troops and 20 artillery in each, one attacked Huangniwa from the north of Beiqiling, and the other attacked from the elevation on the west of Huangniwa; the third group consisted of 3,000 troops and 10 artillery who assaulted the 850 Elevation which was defended by the Chinese 4th Division and the Wu Shaozhou Detachment. In the morning, three groups of the Japanese air force (including 5 planes in each), bombed the battlefield with their artillery, forcing the Chinese force to take cover without a chance to counterattack. The Chinese soldiers were accustomed to such sorts of bombing; they took cover within the terrain and fortifications, waiting for a chance to strike the Japanese infantry when they came close. After multiple hand-to-hand attacks, most Japanese intruders were eliminated in front of the positions of the Chinese Army. Only one battalion of the 19th Regiment of the Chinese 4th Division lost most of its soldiers inside the position at Huangniwa after being bombed by the Japanese air force, artillery and toxic gas. The Japanese intruders broke into Huangniwa at noon. (Lieutenant) Colonel Fu Jingfang of the Chinese 19th Regiment had to defend the position with cooks and grooms. Fortunately, (Lieutenant) Colonel Jiang Dangyi brought two battalions of the 24th Regiment and (Lieutenant) Colonel Ni Zuyao brought one battalion of the 23rd Regiment to reinforce under the supervision of General Shi Jue, attacking the Japanese intruders on the east of Henglingcheng and Changyucheng. The Japanese Army was defeated.¹⁶¹ In addition, General Chen Changjie arrived at Henglingcheng with his 72nd Division

158 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to He Yingqin. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 13.

159 Gou 1962, 20.

160 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 48.

161 Gou 1962, 20.

to reinforce around 9:00 a.m. when the Japanese force broke into the positions of the Chinese 4th Division.¹⁶² The Chinese Army could have annihilated the intruders with one strike at that moment. But this plan could not be carried out when the Japanese 15th Regiment suddenly came to reinforce. The Chinese 4th Division was endangered again at 12:40 p.m., suffering terrible casualties.¹⁶³ Brigadier Lü Ruiying of the 72nd Division brought Gao Jinbo's 415th Regiment to reinforce; however, the defense of the 4th Division was broken by the Japanese Army before the reinforcement arrived. Two mountains were controlled by the Japanese force. (Lieutenant) Colonel Gao was injured soon after he joined the combat. The Chinese cannons were overwhelmed by the Japanese artillery, so the Chinese altered the tactics, suppressing the Japanese machine guns and infantry with one moving cannon behind every position.¹⁶⁴ The position on the west of 870 Elevation fell to the Japanese Army again after having been captured by both Chinese and Japanese forces multiple times. The Chinese force had to be drawn back to their positions at Huilingzi and along the Great Wall, waiting for a chance to counterattack.¹⁶⁵

Since most of the Chinese defenses were positioned in the mountains, only one regiment could be transported to the front each time. The Chinese Army found it difficult to concentrate its reinforcements. Once the Japanese Army took advantage of the terrain, the Chinese reinforcements would be at risk of being defeated separately.¹⁶⁶

The Chinese troops counterattacking Qinglongqiao and Jüyongguan made little progress on that day, except that the Wu Shaozhou Detachment recaptured the 700 Elevation in front of Caojialing and seized considerable quantities of equipment and supplies after repelling the Japanese guarding troops. At 10:00 a.m., the Japanese bombed the position of the Chinese 122nd Regiment at West Daling with artillery and assaulted the same place with 500 - 600 infantry. The Chinese 126th Regiment rushed to reinforce, and the 125th Regiment attacked the rear of the Japanese troops from the left. The Japanese invaders retreated at noon. The Chinese 126th

162 Meeting Minutes of Nankou Campaign. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 20.

163 Gou 1962, 20.

164 Chen 1986, 172.

165 Gou 1962, 20.

166 Gou 1962, 20.

Regiment suffered serious casualties and had to head back to Chenjiabu to rehabilitate at 7:00 p.m.¹⁶⁷

In the morning of the same day, the Japanese Army also attacked the Chinese position at Xiaguan of Jüyongguan with infantry, artillery (tanks), and planes. The Japanese infantry troops were afraid to get close until their artillery and air force had destroyed all Chinese fortifications. Over half of the soldiers in the Chinese 123rd Regiment died or were injured in the hand-to-hand combat. The mountain on the south-east, closest to Xiaguan had once fallen to the Japanese force. General Wang Zhonglian attached a great importance to this mountain, for it was a perfect position for overlooking at Xiaguan. Therefore, at 5:00 p.m., he ordered Li Jin, the commander of the 3rd Battalion of the Chinese 530th Regiment, to recapture all five mountains on the south east of Xiaguan in the night, and his troops would be commanded by Brigadier Cui from the Chinese 21st Division. The secret agents (troops who were responsible for special missions) of the division equipped this battalion with 30 Mauser guns and 30 Chinese war swords. Commander Li soon selected 30 elite soldiers from his battalion and equipped each one with a pistol, a broad war-sword, and 4 hand grenades. Brigadier Cui passed the information about the Japanese troops (received through the reconnaissance) to Commander Li, and ordered him to bring the troops back to defend at Jüyongguan if the counterattack was not successful. But Commander Li swore to recapture the mountain at all costs and issued a plan for the counterattack. The soldiers pledged to get the position on that mountain back even if it meant they would die.¹⁶⁸

In the vicinity of Zhangyuan, the Japanese Army launched attacks with over 3,000 infantry and 30 artillery at the positions of the Chinese Army at Bajiaotai, Datun and Ciershan. The Chinese troops lurked, waiting for the Japanese troops to get close. When the Japanese invaders arrived, the Chinese defenders suddenly started to counterattack with machine guns from different directions. The Japanese troops retreated for a short time, but they soon deployed their main force to assault Bajiaotai again. The battle became even fiercer. Though the Chinese force was outnumbered at that moment, its morale was not undermined. The Japanese suffered over

167 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 48.

168 Wang 1987, 31,32.

200 casualties and the other 200 troops were surrounded by the Chinese 1st and 6th Regiments.¹⁶⁹

4.2.3.3 August 22

At 3:00 a.m., the Chinese 121st Regiment and the 2nd Battalion of the Chinese 124th Regiment attacked the Japanese Army in darkness, and recaptured the positions on the south of Yangtaizi, which the Chinese 89th Division had lost to the Japanese.¹⁷⁰

At dawn, the Japanese artillery bombed the mountains on the south and north of Jüyongguan in order to determine if the Chinese Army was defending those places; but the Chinese troops hid themselves and counterattacked after the Japanese troops came close.¹⁷¹ Another group of Japanese troops attacked Yangjuanzi and Majiayao with their planes while harassing the Chinese position at Jiuxian Temple. The Chinese 534th Regiment fought the Japanese intruders with swords. Though they suffered heavy casualties, the invaders were still repelled.¹⁷²

The Chinese 415th Regiment fought against the "outnumbering" Japanese troops in the mountains on the south west of Changyucheng, and one of the Chinese positions was lost. The Chinese positions defended by the 4th Division at Luozijuan, Fang'anyu and Laohutou were seized by the invaders. The Chinese 19th and 24th Regiments kept resisting when the 416th Regiment in the Chinese 72nd Division came to reinforce and got back their positions. The Chinese Army suffered heavy casualties; Zhang Shuzhen, the commander of the Chinese 416th Division, and Major Sun, the commander of a battalion in the 416th Division, lost their lives in the battle. The 3rd Battalion of the Chinese 433rd Regiment resisted the invaders that were few times more than themselves in number. All of its soldiers were martyred after being isolated. Meanwhile, another group of Japanese troops attacked Mabaoquan; Commander Gao of the

169 A Brief Summary of the Battles of the Chinese 68th Army (reorganized from the 142nd Division) in Zhangyuan. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 58.

170 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 49.

171 Wang 1978, 4021.

172 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 40,42.

Chinese 415th Regiment was injured in the skirmish. The morale of the Chinese 4th and 72nd Divisions was boosted despite their horrible casualties. Soldiers and commanders made an oath that they would dedicate their lives to their defending their positions.¹⁷³

Another large group of Japanese troops from Mabaoquan attacked the positions defended by the Chinese 72nd Division around Zhenbiancheng and Huilingzi, attempting to control the rear of the Chinese defense. The Chinese 72nd Division fought hard, but still had one of their positions 2 kilometers away on the south of Henglingcheng overtaken by the Japanese force. Both sides alternately controlled that position many times, and the Chinese Army got it back finally by the end of that day.¹⁷⁴

The Chinese Army kept fighting in spite of difficulties, without reinforcements or supplies, between Nankou and Hengling for days, suffering 1000 - 2000 casualties every day; on August 22nd the number of casualties reached 2500. But Wei Lihuang's reinforcements, which should have already arrived, still did not show up or send any message.¹⁷⁵ Without any reinforcement, the Chinese Army's positions at 1390 Elevation, 1120 Elevation and other places fell to the Japanese Army.¹⁷⁶

In the vicinity of Zhangyuan, the Japanese planes dropped supplies to their comrades that were besieged by the Chinese force on the previous day (August 21), and strafed the Chinese troops at a low altitude. 70 - 80 Japanese soldiers took that opportunity and escaped. Another 1500 Japanese troops attacked the city of Zhangyuan and fought the Chinese defense power.¹⁷⁷

4.2.3.4 August 23

The Japanese Army started to fiercely attack Majiayao and Jiuxian Temple on the left (east) wing of the Chinese defense at dawn. The Chinese soldiers defended with hand-to-hand combat

173 Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 20;
Chen 1986, 172,173.

174 Gou 1962, 21,22.

175 Gou 1962, 21,22.

176 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 151,152.

177 A Brief Summary of the Battles of the Chinese 68th Army (reorganized from the 142nd Division) in Zhangyuan. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 58.

and the Japanese troops failed to capture any positions.¹⁷⁸ At 7:00 a.m., the Chinese position at Chenjiabu was bombed by over 10 Japanese planes, which fortunately avoided human casualties; only a few horses and mules were injured. At 7:00 p.m., the Japanese main force broke through the Chinese 4th and 72nd Division's defense after a fierce attack. The right (west) wing of the Chinese defense was endangered.¹⁷⁹ At 12:00 at night, the Chinese main force enhanced the defense at Jiuxian Temple, getting ready for a desperate combat against the Japanese intruders.¹⁸⁰

The Chinese Army's pressure around Nankou and Jüyongguan on the left (east) wing of the defense was slightly relieved. The Japanese Army continued to outflank to the west after their failure in attacking Huanglouyuan. They attempted to capture Zhenbiancheng so as to get through the mountain ridge from Shuitou.¹⁸¹

In the afternoon, the Japanese force in front of Henglingcheng became active again. A Japanese regiment in Itagaki's 5th Division sent its troops along 3 different routes and started to attack the position defended by the Chinese 415th Regiment. Gao Jinbo, the commander of the Chinese 415th Regiment, ordered his troops to remain in small strongholds to ambush the intruders with Lü Ruiying's moving artillery. The combat did not end until midnight, when the Chinese troops repelled the Japanese invaders and seized weapons and a map left by the Japanese soldiers. The map, which was drawn before the 918 Incident in 1931, had once been held by a wounded Japanese captain. The scale of that map was 1/50,000 and was clear enough to show the details of the terrain, which showed that Japan had planned to invade China or even the entire East Asia for a long time. The Japanese troops tried to invade Henglingcheng in the night for a second time, but failed again.¹⁸²

The Chinese troops at the front of the Nankou Campaign had not heard from Wei Lihuang's reinforcements, and had a hard time in holding their positions. Due to the shortage of

178 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division, Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 40.

179 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division, Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 50.

180 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division, Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 40.

181 Gou 1962, 22,23.

182 Chen 1986, 174.

troops, the Chinese Army had to draw back its force to consolidate four defense points at Jüyongguan, Henglingcheng, Yanqing and Huailai.¹⁸³

4.2.3.5 August 24

The Japanese heavy artillery bombed the mountain on the south of Jüyongguan before daybreak, after which more than 1000 Japanese infantry troops fiercely attacked the same position defended by the Chinese force.¹⁸⁴ At dawn, East and West Daling suffered a bombing launched by over 10 Japanese planes and 30 cannons; fierce hand-to-hand combat occurred soon after the bombing. Commanders below the battalion level and all soldiers of the Chinese force were killed, and West Daling fell to the Japanese.¹⁸⁵ Around 6:00 a.m., the Chinese positions around Jüyongguan were bombed by the Japanese planes for a second time. Simultaneously, skirmishes broke out at Yangtaizi, Mazhuangzi, Majiayao, Huyu, and Deshengkou.

At 2:00 p.m., the Japanese troops suspended the attack around Jüyongguan, for they wanted to wait for their reinforcements of over 3000 infantry and 20 armored vehicles, who were about to arrive at Nankou Railway Station by train. At 5:00 p.m., the Japanese Army started the bombing again with over 10 heavy cannons; the Sanbu Station in front of Jüyongguan was bombed by more than 200 shells.¹⁸⁶ After the dusk, the Chinese Army at Jüyongguan sent troops to strike the Japanese camps in darkness. The Japanese invaders filled with arrogance relying on their superior weapons, were frustrated.¹⁸⁷

The outflanking Japanese troops moved through Zhenbiancheng to Shibajia on the south of Huailai, and later assaulted Huailai and Kangzhuang. The Japanese planes also kept bombing the railway in that area all day long until the railroads were entirely destroyed. The communications

183 Gou 1962, 22,23.

184 Wang 1987, 33.

185 Detailed Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 21st Division, Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 50.

186 Wang 1987, 33.

187 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 25.

network connecting Jüyongguan and Huailai installed by the Chinese Army was broken at intervals.¹⁸⁸

The Chinese force defending Zhangyuan ambushed the Japanese vanguards who attempted to attack the areas around the city of Zhangyuan, including Dajingmen and Shuimugong. The battle became fierce when the rest of the Japanese troops arrived, but the Japanese did not break into any of the Chinese positions.¹⁸⁹

General Wei Lihuang's three divisions were blocked by the Japanese force at Huangyangang and Qinyukou on the way to reinforce the Chinese Army at the front of the Nankou Campaign. The Chinese headquarters could no longer defend itself since all guarding troops were sent to the front and no available reinforcement had arrived. It was forced to move to Sangyuan and Fanshanbu, where it had not been threatened, in order to avoid being destroyed.¹⁹⁰

4.2.3.6 August 25

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sent General Tang Enbo a telegram, ordering General Tang to command the Chinese forces in Nankou Campaign to defend their positions and not retreat. The Chinese soldiers were reminded to wear gas masks in case the Japanese Army used more chemical bombs.¹⁹¹

At 2:00 a.m., General Tang left the headquarters in Huailai by truck with General Zhu Huaibing, Staff Gou Jitang and a few guards, leaving Colonel Cai Jianming, the leader of the staff officers, in Huailai for garrison duty. General Tang no longer had any guardian troops in reserve. The truck was followed by the Japanese planes which dropped many bombs all the way from Huailai through Sangyuan to Fanshanbu; the planes, however, failed to bomb the truck. General Tang ordered Lieutenant Colonel Quan Ying of the 3rd staff officers' class to return along the Yongding River to the area around Shuitou and Henglingcheng by to contact the Chinese 4th and 72nd Divisions. Lieutenant Colonel Quan found that the two divisions were still

188 Wang 1987, 36.

189 A Brief Summary of the Battles of the Chinese 68th Army (reorganized from the 142nd Division) in Zhangyuan. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 59.

190 Gou 1962, 24.

191 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo on August 25th, 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 14.

fighting against the invaders sporadically. Meanwhile, General Tang ordered his adjutant, Major Liu Juemin, to return to Huailai to assist Colonel Cai Jianming and determine the situation of Ma Yanshou's Independent 7th Brigade which was surrounded by the Japanese. When arriving at Daqiying, 10 kilometers on the west of Huailai, Major Liu heard gunfire, seeing Colonel Cai who just broke out of the Japanese encirclement with a platoon. Then he knew that Huailai had already been besieged by over 2000 Japanese cavalry troops since the dawn on that day. He soon moved to Sangyuan together with Colonel Cai.¹⁹²

The Japanese Army launched a full-scale offensive early in the morning. Jüyongguan was attacked by more than 20 tanks, 30 heavy artillery, and numerous infantry.¹⁹³ The battles at Majiayao, Yangtaizi, Huyu and Deshengkou also became fierce. The Chinese defenses could only hold their positions until 7:00 p.m.¹⁹⁴ The Chinese 89th Division defending at Jüyongguan, which had originally included four regiments, could only deploy one regiment after fighting for days. General Wang Zhonglian, counterattacked the Japanese intruders at Nankou with the only troops in his division, but the morale was still high. General Tang once described the situation as "remnants [of the army] defending at Jüyongguan" before he left Huailai and moved the headquarters (to Sangyuan).¹⁹⁵

The Chinese 89th and 21st Divisions lost most of their troops, and began to retreat to Yanqing at night; the 4th and 72nd Divisions struggled to break the Japanese encirclement and retreat to Sangyuan; the 94th Division was responsible for covering other troops in Yanqing and Zhuolu while retreating; the 84th Division was drawn back to Shacheng; and the Independent 7th Brigade stayed in Huailai for defense.¹⁹⁶

192 Gou 1962, 24.

193 Wang 1987, 34.

194 Report of the Battles around Nankou by the Chinese 89th Division. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 25.

195 Wang 1987, 34,35.

196 Meeting Minutes of Nankou Campaign. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 21.

4.3 Strategic Retreat

4.3.1.1 August 26

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek telegraphed General Tang Enbo, in which General Tang was given an option to draw back the Chinese troops to Yu County, Guangling and Laiyuan if it were not possible to keep fighting; but he was still required to keep contacting General Wei Lihuang's divisions for reinforcement.¹⁹⁷ In the main battlefield of the Nankou Campaign, the Chinese 21st and 89th Divisions had reported an emergency by midnight between the 25th and 26th; the city of Zhangyuan had nearly fallen; Wei Lihuang's troops were still blocked on the way by the Japanese, without any hope to reinforce the front. Therefore, General Tang had to change the plan and let the Chinese troops retreat in order. The Chinese Independent 7th Brigade defended in Huailai to guarantee that other troops could retreat in safety.¹⁹⁸

Regardless of the awful weather, the Japanese planes persisted in bombing the Chinese strongholds. The Chinese defense left the front of Jüyongguan, and the Japanese Army could finally take control of the Guan Valley from Jüyongguan to Badaling. The Japanese invaders were extremely excited about this achievement which they “would never forgot even in dreams while sleeping”¹⁹⁹.

197 Telegram Sent by Chiang Kai-shek to Tang Enbo on August 26th 1937. Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 14.

198 Gou 1962, 24,25.

199 Newspaper Group, Army Ministry of Japan 1938, 157.

5 Significance of Nankou Campaign

The meaning for the strategy in the early time of WWII has been briefly discussed in the section of the historical background. Here in this section is a comparison of the result and achievements between the Nankou Campaign and some other critical military operations in the early time of each theater; it is clear that the Chinese Army, with a more inferior condition and an earlier outbreak of war, was not doing worse than the other Allied powers. Thus, the previous opinion raised by John King Fairbank in his book series *Cambridge History of China* that the Republic of China had few achievements and was only waiting for other Allied powers' assistance during WWII²⁰⁰ needs to be revised.

5.1 Numbers of Casualties

Casualties somehow reflect the cost and the scale of a campaign. It is also, however, not simple to keep the number of casualties accurate for there is no time for the survivors to count the dead and wounded after a battle.

The casualties of the Nankou Campaign have been counted and calculated by different groups, including both Chinese and Japanese. The numbers found today vary vastly with different sources. The casualties recorded in Gou Jitang's book are the most detailed, which provides the number for each division or regiment. The number in total for the Chinese Army turns out to be 16,643. Besides, General Tan Ying writes in his memoir "Our soldiers and commanders suffered casualties of over 16,600..."²⁰¹, which meets the number provided by Gou Jitang. Unfortunately, the 84th Division and the Artillery 27th Regiment had not reported their casualties to the command center by the end of the campaign. The casualties of the Chinese Army should be more than 16,643. According to the information of Chinese NRA that attended the Nankou Campaign in Gou Jitang's record (See Tab. 2.1 in Section 2.3.1), the 17th Army, consisting of 21st and 84th Divisions, had 14 thousand soldiers approximately; while 27th Regiment had less than 2,000. Even if it is assumed that 10,000 in the 17th Army were from 84th

200 Fairbank, John King. *The Cambridge History of China*. Edited by John King Fairbank and Albert Feuerwerker. Vol. 13. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986. 547-608.

201 Tan 2011, 55.

Division and they were either wounded or died, the casualties of the entire Chinese force should be no more than 28 thousand²⁰².

Tab. 5.1 Number of Casualties of the Chinese Army in the Nankou Campaign, by Gou Jitang²⁰³

| | Commanders | | Soldiers | | sum |
|---------------------------|--------------|------|----------|------|--------|
| | Wounded | Died | Wounded | Died | |
| 4th Division | 85 | 47 | 3822 | 2599 | 6553 |
| 89th Division | 102 | 34 | 4034 | 1914 | 6084 |
| 21st Division | 74 | 24 | 1595 | 584 | 2277 |
| 72nd Division | 36 | 23 | 418 | 441 | 918 |
| 94th Division | 36 | 11 | 318 | 166 | 531 |
| 84th Division | not reported | | | | |
| Independent 7th Brigade | 15 | 6 | 163 | 96 | 280 |
| 27th Regiment (Artillery) | not reported | | | | |
| Total | 348 | 145 | 10,350 | 5800 | 16,643 |

Meeting Minutes of the Warzone II²⁰⁴ provided the data of casualties, most of which are very different from Gou Jitang's records. Since Gou Jitang's records were just a manuscript which was not published until postwar time and few people had the access to his manuscript, so Gou Jitang's did not have any purpose other than taking records. Thus, his words should be objective, and the numbers he provided are considered more reliable than the numbers in the minutes. The casualties reported in the meeting, however, might have been amplified for some other purposes, for example, serious casualties (death and permanently disabled) is usually a good excuse to ask the generalissimo for more soldiers and supplies. Thus, the casualty in total

202 This number, as 28 thousand, is a result of adding up 16 thousand (casualty of the entire Chinese force excluding the ones that were not reported), 10 thousand (when it is assumed that 84th Division had the majority of the 17th Army) and 2 thousand (maximum number of the soldiers in 27 Regiment).

203 Gou 1962, 42.

204 During the Second World War, the Theater of China was demarcated into many warzones based on the boundaries of the provinces at the time. The major Chinese force that had fought against Japan in Nankou Campaign moved to the second warzone after September, 1937. So the meeting was held in the name of Warzone II.

claimed by the meeting minutes, appeared as 33,992, nearly twice of the number in the primary source recorded by Gou Jitang, is probably an exaggeration.

Unfortunately, most currently published books, articles and reports related to Nankou Campaign are more likely to use the numbers in the minutes, which deliver less reliable information.

Tab. 5.2 Number of Casualties of the Chinese Army in the Nankou Campaign²⁰⁵

| | Commanders | | Soldiers | | Horses | |
|---------------------------|------------|------|----------|------|---------|------|
| | Wounded | Died | Wounded | Died | Wounded | Died |
| 4th Division | 180 | 130 | 4000 | 1700 | 700 | 400 |
| 89th Division | 200 | 200 | 4500 | 1600 | 800 | 500 |
| 21st Division | 160 | 148 | 2700 | 1300 | 600 | 300 |
| 72nd Division | 80 | 118 | 2500 | 900 | 200 | 100 |
| 94th Division | 150 | 106 | 5000 | 1500 | 600 | 200 |
| 84th Division | 140 | 154 | 2600 | 1200 | 500 | 200 |
| Independent 7th Brigade | 60 | 34 | 800 | 600 | 70 | 60 |
| 21st Regiment (Artillery) | 10 | 7 | 500 | 200 | 200 | 50 |
| 27th Regiment (Artillery) | 9 | 6 | 400 | 100 | 60 | 40 |
| Total | 989 | 903 | 23000 | 9100 | 3730 | 1850 |

“History of China’s Anti-Japanese War (Volume II)” states that the casualties of Nankou Campaign were around 26,736 without citing the source.²⁰⁶ This number is used by historians in western countries.²⁰⁷ As the 84th Division and 27th Regiment had not reported their casualties, it can only be assumed that the casualties of the 84th Division and the 27th Regiment were around 10,000, which makes up the total number as 26,000 with the number of other divisions provided by Gou Jitang.

205 Meeting Minutes of Warzone II. Changping Committee of CPPCC 2007, 318.

206 Military History Department of the Chinese Military Academy 1994, 27.

207 Van de Ven 2003, 195;
Mitter 2013, 90.

Casualties of the Japanese Army are also unclear. As it is published, the IJA only lost 2,000 soldiers in the Nankou Campaign; while records in China say over 15,000 enemies were annihilated.

Although it is not simple to tell the exact number of Japanese soldiers who died in that campaign without any authorized documents, it is sure that 2,000 is a boast. Based on the scale of the Nankou Campaign, if the Japanese could really lose such a small amount of troops, they should not have fought hard for 18 days. Besides, they kept moving to the west as a result of the failure to capture Jüyongguan from the front side and throwing toxic gas bombs when it was difficult to capture a stronghold, because the Chinese defensive force also repelled tenaciously and gave them a hard time. Although in many battles the Chinese force lost nearly their entire regiments, the casualties of Japanese intruders often doubled.²⁰⁸ So, it is not a great exaggeration to declare that the Chinese defensive force had eliminated 15,000 Japanese invaders.

5.2 Achievement of the Chinese Army: A Miracle in Military History

China's War of Resistance against Japan is an inseparable part of the Second World War. Being the first mass campaign after the Republic of China proclaimed war against Japan, *Nankou* Campaign, should have been generally acknowledged and well interpreted as the first campaign of the redefined Second World War.

In most battles in the early time of the World War II, the Allies suffered defeats, such as the Dunkirk Evacuation in 1940, in the European Theater; the Battle of Wake Island in 1941 in the Pacific Ocean; and the Philippines Campaign in 1941-1942. The results of the *Nankou* Campaign stand out. Despite the fact that *Nankou* had fallen at last, it was a great achievement that the Chinese Revolutionary Army, with inferior weapons, could have kept fighting against the overwhelming Imperial Japanese Army for 18 days in 1937. This was two years earlier than the earliest battles in Europe. The Chinese Army held their positions for 18 days and annihilated over 10,000 Japanese troops; the Chinese Army suffered approximately 30,000 casualties in that

208 Gou 1962, 14, 18.

campaign.²⁰⁹ The Japanese invaders' plan to capture *Nankou* in 5 days and defeat China within 3 months had failed.²¹⁰

Tab. 5.3 Comparison of Units and Weaponry between Chinese and Japanese Forces²¹¹

| | Chinese | Japanese |
|-----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Infantry | About 60,000 | Over 70,000 |
| Cavalry | Few | Tanks and armored vehicles |
| Artillery | Tens of cannons | Hundreds of cannons |
| Air force | None | Fighters and bombers |
| Toxic Gas | Never have or use | Used many times |



Fig. 5.1 a gas mask found in the battlefield of Nankou Campaign, by Yang Guoqing²¹²

Apparently, the Chinese force was much weaker than the Japanese in the Nankou Campaign. The Chinese soldiers had no anti-tank weapons; they invented "bundled hand grenades" to destroy the Japanese tanks, at a terrible cost of soldiers' lives since the grenades

209 Changping District Committee of the CPPCC 2007, 318.

210 Wu 1992.

211 Gou 1962, 7-10.

212 The gas mask in this photo was found by Mr. Yang, a citizen in Changping District who has insisted on searching and collecting remains discovered in the battlefield of Nankou Campaign.

were only functional in a close distance.²¹³ When the Japanese army could still not break the defense of the Chinese force easily with their overwhelming power, their shame grew into anger which pushed them to use toxic gas²¹⁴ regardless of the Geneva Protocol²¹⁵. Chiang Kai-shek had to save the best troops for the Songhu Campaign (Shanghai Campaign), which broke out 5 days later on August 13th in Shanghai. The only first rate troops sent to Nankou was the 13th Army, armed with rifles bought from Germany, but they were still limited in number and lacked artillery.²¹⁶

It seemed that the terrain of the mountain ridge and the Great Wall in the battlefield were the only advantage for the Chinese defensive force. These were not always advantageous; however, since the Great Wall was built in ancient times to defend against the invaders from the north, while in the Nankou Campaign, the invaders came from Beiping on the south east. Sometimes, the structures of the Great Wall become obstacles for the defenders.²¹⁷

5.3 Effect: One More Allied Power, One Less Axis Accomplice

In 1930s, the Republic of China had many joint operations with Germany, especially in military programs. Many of the advisory counselors in the National Revolutionary Army were from Germany. Also, China exchanged wolframite for weapons to build their mechanized armies, which was, unfortunately, not accomplished because the war broke out ahead of the time that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek had expected.²¹⁸ Germany was an ally as well as the tutor of Japan; therefore, China, had to renounce the assistance and advising from Germany once engaged in war against Japan. The German government had considered persuading Japan to stop

213 Gou 1962, 35.

214 Gou 1962, 18.

215 Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare 1925, text available at: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Bio/1925GenevaProtocol.shtml>, or http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Bio/pdf/Status_Protocol.pdf

216 Mitter 2013, 90.

217 Wang 1987, 11;
Tan 2011, 46.

218 Liu 1956, 109,110.

their attacks on China, if China were willing to join the alliance which would later become the Axis. But China did not want to join the “Axis” powers, and Japan did not want China to be an ally. Instead, Japan’s plan was always to enslave China and capture the entire mainland as its colony. Once the Nankou Campaign broke out, there was no doubt that China had chosen to stand with the alliance that would be known as the Allied Powers later.

Epilogue

Our world today is established on the result of the Second World War, and our knowledge of its events and its players, some of whom have been discounted in our history and our consciousness. The way we recognize the war history somehow influences the structure of our world today. For instance, the permanent members of the UN Security Council, also known as the Big Five, include five governments: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom., and the United States. However, few people today know that China earned his permanent membership because of the participation and great efforts in the Second World War. That China, as a member of the Allies during the Second World War and one of the original permanent members of the UN Security Council, was the Republic of China (ROC), not the People's Republic (PRC). ROC was driven to Taiwan province by the Communists and forced to abandon the membership. Thus, most efforts and achievements in the Asian Theater of World War II have been stolen by the Communists, and China has become the only country whose efforts are obscured seriously in the four chief Allied Powers (China, UK, USSR, US). Without correcting the mistakes of the interpretation of the Asian-Pacific Theater, we do not qualify to claim that we won the Second World War or to celebrate the so-called “victory” – we defeated the Fascism, but we lost to the Communism.

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